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JESUS CHRIST IN HISTORY AND FAITH

BEING THE

WILLIAM BELDEN NOBLE LECTURES

DELIVERED IN HARVARD UNIVERSITY, 1924

BY THE

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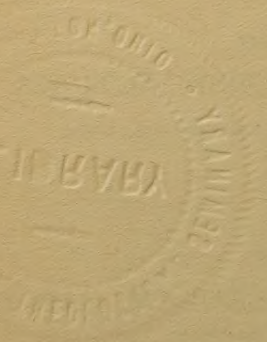

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THE WILLIAM BELDEN NOBLE LECTURES

This Lectureship was constituted a perpetual foundation in Harvard University in 1898, as a memorial to the late William Belden Noble of Washington, D.C. (Harvard, 1885). The Deed of Gift provides that the lectures shall not be less than six in number, that they shall be delivered annually, and, if convenient, in the Phillips Brooks House, during the season of Advent. Each lecturer shall have ample notice of his appointment, and the publication of each course of lectures is required. The purpose of the Lectureship will be further seen in the following citation from the Deed of Gift, by which it was established:

"The object of the founder of the Lectures is to continue the mission of William Belden Noble, whose supreme desire it was to extend the influence of Jesus as the way, the truth, and the life; to make known the meaning of the words of Jesus, 'I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly.' In accordance with the large interpretation of the Influence of Jesus by the late Phillips Brooks, with whose religious teaching he in whose memory the Lectures are established and also the founder of the Lectures were in deep sympathy, it is intended that the scope of the Lec-

tures shall be as wide as the highest interests of humanity. With this end in view—the perfection of the spiritual man and the consecration by the spirit of Jesus of every department of human character, thought, and activity—the Lectures may include philosophy, literature, art, poetry, the natural sciences, political economy, sociology, ethics, history, both civil and ecclesiastical, as well as theology and the more direct interests of the religious life. Beyond a sympathy with the purpose of the Lectures, as thus defined, no restriction is placed upon the lecturer."

PREFACE

The following lectures were delivered in Harvard University on the William Belden Noble foundation. I must begin, therefore, by expressing my thanks to the Corporation of the University of Harvard for the honour they did me in appointing me to give the lectures, to the President and the Dean of the Divinity Faculty for their very great courtesy to me during my residence in Harvard, and to many in Harvard and Boston, to whom I am indebted for kindness and hospitality, especially to my old friend, Dr. McComb. I should also like to express my thanks to the foundress of the lectures, Mrs. Noble, for the interest that she takes in them, and for her personal kindness to myself.

These lectures carry on a little further the work that I began in the Investigation of the Life and Teaching of Jesus the Christ. In that book I confined myself definitely within a certain sphere. I did not attempt to ask any of the theological questions which might arise, but only tried to narrate the life of Jesus, or rather the first part of that life, as it seemed to be presented as the result of careful historical criticism. I definitely avoided many difficult questions because it seemed to me that our starting-point must be from things about which there can be least reasonable doubt. It is, of course,

necessary to say least reasonable doubt, because there is not a single point with regard to the life of the Founder of Christianity which has not been doubted by somebody. It is clear, however, that the narrative of S. Mark's Gospel and the great bulk of the teaching recorded in the Gospels are critically in a different position to such questions as are raised by S. John's Gospel, or by the story of the Resurrection appearances and the Birth narratives. I, therefore, took my stand on what might be considered by most reasonable people to be safe ground, and on that basis attempted to construct the life of our Lord, leaving my readers to draw their conclusions about what that life implied.

In the present work I have advanced further. I have attempted tentatively to write about the later ministry of our Lord and His death upon the Cross. I have touched also on the question of the Resurrection appearances and the Virgin Birth—I do not feel that I have treated any of these subjects as exhaustively as I should like. I have then advanced further to consider the theological questions which must ultimately be asked. What is the relation of the historical Christ to the Christ of faith? It will thus be seen that while the first three lectures go over ground which I have already treated with some fulness in my previous work, although from a somewhat different point of view, in the remaining lectures I am breaking new ground. I hope some day I may be able to complete my original design with greater thoroughness.

Since these lectures were delivered Dr. Streeter's striking work on *The Four Gospels* has been pub-

lished, and I am glad to find much in it that tends to corroborate the general critical position that I have taken up. Dr. Streeter starts with a review of the textual question, and arrives at the conclusion that we must substitute for the one neutral text on which Westcott and Hort built up their conclusions five or six separate local traditions—the Alexandrian tradition, the Roman tradition, the Antiochene tradition, the tradition of Cæsarea, with possible traditions of Ephesus and Jerusalem. We have really a greater wealth of authorities, probably derived independently from the original texts, than we had believed, and the result takes us in many cases behind the text which Westcott and Hort have constructed. Dr. Streeter, with far greater knowledge and historical insight, has really corroborated the position which I had suggested with regard to textual criticism.

When he passes to the higher criticism, he substitutes for the old two-document hypothesis a four-document hypothesis. Our existing Synoptic Gospels are, in his opinion, constructed out of four documents—(1) S. Mark, (2) the document usually called "Q," which I am trying to name *The Discourses*, (3) a work of strongly Judæo-Christian tendencies used by S. Matthew, and (4) a collection of discourses of our Lord representing the more universalistic side of His teaching used, or put together, by S. Luke. The result of this is to suggest that, at any rate as regards the teaching of our Lord, we are no longer confined to such narrow sources as the two-document hypothesis implied, but that we may take the bulk of the teaching recorded in the Synoptic Gospels as

representing current, and for the most part authentic, teaching of our Lord as it was written down during the first and second Christian generations. That again represents the point of view that I have taken.

Dr. Streeter supports these conclusions by emphasizing the importance of the great central Churches of Christendom. He suggests, for example, that the tradition in each city—Rome, Alexandria, and so on—goes back to original documents brought thither early, and that this hypothesis applies both to textual matters and to higher criticism. There would be early copies of the Gospels in each city and they would be kept, and that would represent the local tradition. At a later date there would be the tendency to revise them in accordance with the tradition of other cities, and so mixed texts arose. Then again, before our Gospels were written, at the very beginnings of the preaching of Christianity, collections of the sayings of our Lord as composed and taught by the first missionaries would be preserved, and each of them would be different in some points from others. There would be thus many local traditions and slightly different accounts of the same sayings or events. He finds traces of such early documents in *The Discourses*, which might represent a tradition of Capernaum, or in the records of our Lord's teaching preserved by Clement of Rome, which might represent the Roman tradition. This is not the place to examine Dr. Streeter's position, however. I only referred to it here in order to emphasize the importance of his corroboration of the main critical

principle on which both my former work and these lectures are founded.

Perhaps I may make also some slight reference to an interesting little book which was put into my hands lately—*The Understanding of Jesus*, by Vladimir G. Simkhovitch, Professor of Economic History at Columbia University.

Professor Simkhovitch approaches the study of the life of our Lord from what I may describe as an unprofessional standpoint. He is not a technical theologian. He is not enamoured of modern criticism. He rather takes the documents as he would take other documents which came before him for use in ancient history, and he is inclined to brush aside a good many of the cobwebs which have been spun round them. He studies the life of Jesus rather from the political point of view, and he makes the centre of its importance lie, as might be natural from his assumptions, in the political aspect of Jesus' career. Jesus came as the Messiah, but He definitely repudiated the current Messianic conception. The ideals of the Jews looked forward to revolt and political independence. Jesus had the political insight to see that this could not produce anything but disaster, and He interpreted His own Message and the Jewish position from a religious and not a political standpoint. He repudiated and condemned the crude political aspirations of the Jews. He tried to turn them back to their religious ideals. And in doing this He displayed not only the emotional gifts of a religious leader, but deep intellectual insight.

Now all this would seem to me admirable up to a

certain point. Professor Simkhovitch has nothing to do with those people who think the life of our Lord unhistorical. He is not attracted by the glamour which surrounded the Apocalyptic interpretation. He says many things simply and plainly. But, like others who give us partial expositions of our Lord's life, he is limited in his outlook. He accounts well for certain aspects of Christianity, but he does not explain how it was that our Lord has become the centre of religious worship and cult. He puts as the central feature of His teaching what was really a subordinate point. The attitude of Jesus to political questions did not arise from any particular interest that He took in such problems, but came as a result of His general teaching. Current political ideals were subordinate points inconsistent with His fundamental purpose. He came to reveal God to man and human life in its reality, and when once the ultimate purpose and destiny of mankind was explained, then all these subordinate aims ceased to be of any importance. Their fundamental futility was apparent.

Professor Simkhovitch shows much sanity in his interpretation; his testimony to the intellectual power of Jesus is of fundamental importance, but in substituting the political for the religious motive, he loses real insight into our Lord's ministry. The meaning of our Lord's ministry is shown by the creation of the Christian Church, and ultimately is correctly expressed in the Christian Creed.

A. C. GLOUCESTR:

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LECTURE I

THE HISTORICAL AUTHORITY FOR OUR LORD'S MINISTRY

THE HISTORICAL AUTHORITY FOR OUR LORD'S MINISTRY

The purpose of these lectures is twofold—first to investigate the historical authority for the life of Jesus, and to give a constructive account of the character and purpose of His Ministry; then secondly to correlate that picture of Jesus as a fact in human history with the traditional conception of His life and purpose. Others in giving these lectures have perhaps made a more direct and personal religious appeal. That is an admirable purpose, but it is not mine. It is necessary that before we can make that appeal we should have a clear idea of what is the truth, the historical truth, on these fundamental questions. On each of them very varied opinions have been put forward in recent years. Sometimes people find it difficult to find a clear way through the maze of conflicting theories. I believe that if I can do anything, however imperfect, towards establishing a strong historical foundation for our conception of Christ, I shall make a useful and necessary contribution to the wise purpose of the foundress of these lectures, and shall help to erect a worthy memorial to him in whose memory they have been founded.

It will not, of course, be possible within the limits

imposed upon me to give either the complete facts or the full arguments on which any conclusions that I may come to are based. That could only be done in a work intended for scholars, whereas in these lectures I only propose to give the results of investigations, as they appear to one who has followed them for many years. I make no pretence in doing so to be free from presuppositions and prejudices; I have never found anyone who is. What I do claim is to have tried honestly to find out for myself what is the truth. There is a curious pretentiousness that prevails especially among ultra-liberal theologians and their supporters—that it is they who represent unbiassed research and that, provided the result of their investigation is to discredit the current theology, they may claim to have investigated without prejudice. There is really no opinion less justified by experience than that. If the form of expression of the orthodox theology of the past is often out of harmony with our habits of thought, yet fundamentally the Christian Church has always taught the same truths; but if you study the history of criticism and of the Rationalist movement from 1830 to 1880 you will find that, whether in its general methods or in its detail, its results would now be looked upon as fundamentally wrong, not only by orthodox but by modernist critics. The presentation of Church history that Baur of the Tübingen school gives us is one which no one now accepts—that is, no one who can be taken seriously as a scholar. It is not merely that his conclusions are inadequate; they are wrong, just as the philosophy which inspired him was wrong. I am quite ready to

commend anyone who begins his investigations by guarding himself against orthodox prejudices, but it is equally necessary that he should guard himself against unorthodox presuppositions. He should remember that the particular form of criticism which prevails at present is not the final word of human intelligence, but a transitory phase of thought.

We must begin with documents. What are the documents which give us an account of the life of our Lord? When were they written? How far do they contain a veracious history? How far can we trust them? And then, what are the subsidiary authorities which throw light on the life of Jesus and help us to estimate its significance? I am afraid that in answering these questions I may find myself going over ground which is familiar to some of you, but there are so many to whom it is not familiar that I must ask the patience of those who know. Now our information about Jesus is derived from the four Gospels, and there is nothing directly of importance outside them. There are, indeed, the apocryphal Gospels, and from time to time an attempt is made to put them on a level with the Canonical Gospels. You can study them for yourselves now in the admirable collection of apocryphal literature on the New Testament published by the Oxford Press,[1] and edited by the first English authority on the subject, Dr. Montague James, Provost of Eton. You read them for yourselves, and I think you will be quite clearly convinced how inferior they are. With the possible excep-

[1] *The Apocryphal New Testament*, by Montague Rhodes James. Oxford: at the Clarendon Press, 1924.

tion of the fragments we possess of the Gospel of the Hebrews and of the Gospel of Peter, which are, comparatively speaking, early, the only value for our purpose of the apocryphal Gospels is the contrast that they present between what is undoubtedly mythical and what is historically valuable. They belong to a completely different class of literature to the four Gospels, and it is with these, therefore, that we are concerned. I propose first of all somewhat shortly to speak of the actual evidence for the date of these four Gospels and the conclusions of criticism as to their structure and history, and then to investigate more fully the historical value of their contents.

I

First, as to the external history. When, some forty years ago, I began the study of the early days of Christianity, a period in the history of criticism was just coming to an end. The critics of the first half of the nineteenth century, revolting against merely traditional views, had tended to place the greater number of the books of the New Testament in the second century. Gradually this position was undermined, mainly by the appeal to external evidence. The literature of the ante-Nicene period was studied with minute care; its dates were fixed with greater and greater accuracy; its testimony to the books of the New Testament was collected. In England the leaders in this work were the theologians of the Cambridge school—Lightfoot, Hort, Westcott. In Germany the most conspicuous names are those of Zahn and Harnack, and the

large number of scholars who worked with and were inspired by Harnack. The leading dates were the publication of Lightfoot's edition of *Ignatius* in 1885; of his edition of *Clement of Rome* in 1890; of Zahn's *History of the New Testament Canon* in 1888, and of Harnack's *Chronology of Old Christian Literature* in 1897. Harnack sums up the result of his investigations in the following words:

"There was a time—indeed, there still is for the public generally—in which the oldest Christian literature, including the New Testament, was looked upon as a tissue of forgeries and deceptions. That time is gone by. For science it was an episode in which much was learnt and after which much must be forgotten. But the results of the following investigations go far further in a reactionary direction than what is looked upon as the middle position in present-day criticism. The oldest literature of the Church, whether we look at the general position or at particular details, from the historical and literary point of view, must be looked upon as trustworthy. In the whole New Testament there is probably only one book which would be classed as pseudonymous in the strictest sense of the word, and apart from gnostic forgeries, the number of pseudonymous ecclesiastical writings up to the time of Irenæus was small. . . . Also the number of writings interpolated in the second century, like the Pastoral Epistles, is small, and a considerable part of the interpolations is as harmless as those in our hymn-books. . . . Also the traditions of the pre-Catholic times of literary history are in main outline trustworthy."[1]

[1] *Geschichte der Altchristlichen Litteratur bis Eusebius.* Von Adolf Harnack. Zweiter Theil. Die Chronologie der Altchristlichen Litteratur. Leipzig, 1897. I. viii.

Now substantially that verdict is accepted. There may be doubt about this or that book, but we can now see that the books of the New Testament belong to the first century, the Apostolic Fathers and the Apologists to the second century. This is shown not merely by external evidence, but by style, vocabulary, theology, subject-matter, point of view. The theology of the second century presupposes the writings of the Canon. It may be true, as a recent critic has aimed once more at showing, that the Pastoral Epistles belong to the second century in their theology and their vocabulary. I do not feel that the case is made out, but if it be true it is because these epistles are found to differ in vocabulary and style from the books which clearly belong to the first century and approximate to those which belong to the second century. The arguments used presuppose, they do not overthrow, my main contention, that the bulk of the writings of the New Testament, including the Gospels, belong to the first century and represent the teaching, the life, and the history of the Apostolic and sub-Apostolic ages.

Let me just pause to emphasize the importance of this historical episode in the history of criticism to which I have drawn your attention. It certainly made a great impression upon my mind, and I think rightly. When I remembered the confident assertions of some of the critics, that they had disproved the Gospel narrative and the Gospel theology, and the still more confident statements of the modernists and others who made use of and popularized their investigations, and then discovered how unsub-

stantial their position was, it made my attitude ever since towards the ultra-modernist and his somewhat confident assertions most critical. I do not mean that all traditional views are true—certainly they are not. I do not mean that criticism teaches us nothing—rightly used, it helps us a great deal. But I ask you always to suspend your judgment when you have confident assertions made of the untrustworthy character of our Christian traditions, and always to remember that criticism must itself be subject to a very careful process of criticism.

II

I come now to the critical investigation of the structure and history of the four Gospels. I need not remind you—and I am addressing the ordinary reader as well as the scholar—that these four books present some marked and interesting features. They quite clearly divide themselves into two groups. There are the first three, which have been called by scholars the Synoptic Gospels because they agree in their presentation of the life of Jesus; and there is a fourth Gospel, which is equally remarkable for the points in which it agrees with and the points in which it differs from the other three.

The three Synoptic Gospels will demand our first attention, and here I am going to venture to be somewhat dogmatic. The problem of the relation of these three books has occupied the attention of scholars for the last hundred years, and I believe certain results have been attained. I do not think that I am prejudiced in ascribing the most scientific

investigations which have ultimately been decisive to the Oxford investigators, who owed their inspiration and enthusiasm to the influence of Dr. Sanday, and in particular to the work of Sir John Hawkins. But while ascribing the foremost place to their work, it must be remembered that they followed on a long line of investigators whose labours they inherited, and that the same or similar conclusions have been arrived at independently in Germany, in France, and in America.[1]

Let me now summarize these conclusions.

1. The Gospel ascribed to S. Mark is earlier in date than those of S. Matthew and S. Luke, and was one of the principal sources of both these works.[2] There is still some difference of opinion as to whether it has been in any way revised since they made use of it. I doubt myself whether there was any such revision, but in any case the revision must have been a slight one. As to S. Mark's Gospel, we know this about it. Early tradition tells us that it was the work of S. Mark and that it contained the narrative of the life of our Lord which was taught by S. Peter. Its date is usually ascribed to the period between A.D. 60 and 70, and the place of its

[1] Since these lectures were delivered Dr. Streeter's great book on the four Gospels has been published (*The Four Gospels: A Study of Origins, treating of the Manuscript Tradition, Sources, Authorship, and Dates*, by Burnett Hillman Streeter, Hon. D.D. [Edin.], Fellow of Queen's College, Oxford; Canon of Hereford). I have given a fuller account of it in the Preface. I think that I may fairly claim that while it advances the study of the Gospels far further than any work that has appeared for many years, it in the main supports the position taken up in these lectures.

[2] Throughout these lectures I use the conventional names S. Matthew, S. Mark, S. Luke, and S. John for the four Gospels without implying any theory of authorship.

composition was Rome. The common tradition is that it was written by S. Mark after the death of S. Peter, but some authorities are inclined to place it earlier.

2. S. Matthew and S. Luke use besides a second source, which is commonly called by critics "Q," from the initial letter of the German word *quelle*. That designation has the advantage of being neutral in its character. Personally I dislike hieroglyphs and ideographs, and I have ventured to call it *The Discourses*. There is a good deal of difference of opinion as to what were the contents of this document. Some critics are inclined to ascribe to it much that is contained in S. Matthew which is not contained in S. Luke. Any arguments of that sort seem to me precarious, and that they are precarious can be seen by anyone who will take the trouble to compare the different reconstructions that have been made. I prefer myself to be content with the reconstruction given us by Harnack, who has collected together all that matter common to S. Matthew and S. Luke which is not contained in S. Mark, and has arranged it in what he considers its probable order. Such a reconstruction is reasonably safe. It gives us rational grounds for thinking that that amount of matter was contained in some written work earlier than either of these two Gospels. That is about as far as we can go. But there is some historical evidence for thinking that there was a collection of sayings or discourses or oracles of our Lord ascribed to S. Matthew in circulation in the early Church, and it is not unreasonable to think that it was this document to which I

have assigned the name of *The Discourses* which was used by the authors of the first and third Gospels; that it was written by S. Matthew, and that then the name of Matthew was transferred from that document to the first Gospel, as containing a full record of the earlier work.

3. The first Gospel was constructed on the basis of S. Mark, by adding a large amount of material obtained partly from *The Discourses*, partly from other sources. It is, however, important to notice that, except as regards the first two chapters, the author has little or no narrative except that derived from S. Mark; at any rate, quite certainly he had no other connected narrative. On the other hand, he had a large amount of further information about the teaching of Jesus. His method as regards this teaching was to collect together, from various sources, teaching about different topics, and to arrange it in lengthy discourses, the most important being that which is called the Sermon on the Mount. He often dislocates the chronological arrangement of S. Mark to suit this purpose. The author, whoever he was, was clearly much interested in the controversy between the Christian Church and Judaism. He is always anxious to prove from the Old Testament Scriptures that Jesus fulfilled the Messianic expectation. His Gospel was probably written under the influence of the siege and fall of Jerusalem.

4. The structure of S. Luke's Gospel was somewhat different. The material derived from S. Mark is collected together in certain separate sections. On the other hand, the material from *The Discourses*

is mixed up with a considerable amount of information derived from other sources. Further than that, S. Luke often gives the story which we have in S. Mark in a somewhat different version, and it looks as if he preferred another version of a story when he could get it. These facts have suggested to Dr. Streeter that S. Luke first wrote an account of the life of our Lord out of such material as he was able to collect together in Jerusalem and Palestine when he was there as the companion of S. Paul; that then at a later date when he came to Rome he came in contact with a copy of the Gospel of S. Mark, and added from it such information as he had not yet obtained. Whether this is true or not, it does put before us an important point, that we have here a certain amount of narrative not derived from S. Mark; that we have a considerable amount of teaching also coming from other sources than either that in S. Matthew or in S. Mark; and that, to a certain extent at any rate, it seems earlier and perhaps gives a more original tradition of our Lord's discourses. There is no reason to doubt that the third Gospel was written by S. Luke, nor do I think we need hesitate to say that it was written some time about the years A.D. 70-80. A certain number of writers, including Professor Harnack, would place it before the year 70. There is nothing impossible in that date, but certainly to me the perspective and point of view of both the Gospel and the Acts seem to be somewhat later.

We have, then, these four documents—S. Mark, *The Discourses* so far as we can reconstruct it, S. Matthew, and S. Luke. We have no means of

dating them with any minute accuracy, but we can be certain, I think, that they were all written before the year 80 or thereabouts; for our three Gospels were certainly known to the author of the fourth Gospel, and I do not think that the fourth Gospel could have been written later than about the year A.D. 100. My own opinion would put them somewhat earlier than this. In any case, I would say that S. Mark and *The Discourses* belong to the first generation of Christians, S. Matthew and S. Luke to the second generation, and that the subject-matter they contain is the narrative and teaching as it was told and had been, at any rate to a large extent, written down during the first thirty years of the Christian Church.

III

We are now in a position to approach more directly the question of the historical character of this information. I would propose to treat separately the narrative and the teaching. As far as regards the narrative the question is simply that of the authority of S. Mark. We have, indeed, a certain amount of extra information from S. Luke, and perhaps a certain amount of corroboration, but this is not of any great importance. For our knowledge of the life of our Lord we are really dependent upon S. Mark, and must therefore devote a little more attention to that Gospel.

I have said that there is an early and good tradition that the material that S. Mark gives us comes from S. Peter, and that tradition is widely accepted.

Of course there are some people who assume that no statement in an ancient document can possibly be credible, and imagine that the guesses of the critic of the nineteenth or twentieth century are much more trustworthy. But I think that we shall find that we have good ground for accepting this hypothesis. There is, however, a preliminary question that we have to ask. Does the whole of the Gospel come from that one source—the teaching of S. Peter—so that we can say quite simply that the authority of S. Mark is the authority of S. Peter, or has S. Mark combined with S. Peter's teaching information obtained from other sources? My own opinion is that not all comes from S. Peter—that there are clearly two or more sources of information; and my reason for saying that is that we seem to get two narratives of the same event in the Gospel and occasionally two reports of the same sayings. The most conspicuous instance is the Feeding of the Five Thousand and the Feeding of the Four Thousand. There is so much resemblance between the two events, and they are so closely identical except as regards the numbers—and numbers are never really trustworthy—that I cannot but think that they are two independent accounts of the same event. And if this has happened in one case I do not feel any doubt but that probably S. Mark obtained information from other sources than the teaching of S. Peter.

I therefore look upon S. Mark's Gospel as containing, first of all, the narrative of our Lord's life as it was given by S. Peter. The contents of this narrative are given us in a speech of S. Peter in the

Acts of the Apostles, that which he addressed to Cornelius and his kinsmen:

"The word which he sent unto the children of Israel, preaching good tidings of peace by Jesus Christ (he is Lord of all)—that saying ye yourselves know, which was published throughout all Judæa, beginning from Galilee, after the baptism which John preached: even Jesus of Nazareth, how that God anointed him with the Holy Ghost and with power; who went about doing good, and healing all that were oppressed of the devil, for God was with him. And we are witnesses of all things which he did both in the country of the Jews and in Jerusalem; whom also they slew, hanging him on a tree. Him God raised up the third day and gave him to be made manifest, not to all the people, but unto witnesses that were chosen before of God, even to us who did eat and drink with him after he rose from the dead."[1]

That, you will see, is not a bad summary of the contents of S. Mark's Gospel. I think, then, that that represents the main part of the information that he gives, but I think that there was other matter which came from a different source. How far we are able to distinguish the two sources—as, for example, Professor Bacon does in his extremely acute work[2]—I have great doubts. I do not think that we have sufficient data to do it.

Let us turn to the narrative. Has it the marks

[1] Acts x. 36-41.

[2] *The Beginnings of Gospel Story*, by Benjamin Wisner Bacon, D.D., LL.D., Buckingham Professor of New Testament Criticism and Exegesis in Yale University, Newhaven, Connecticut. Yale University Press, 1909.

of this origin? Has it the appearance of being derived from someone who is recording faithfully and accurately the events in which he has taken part? Now, what signs in a narrative would enable us to answer that question in the affirmative? I think, first, we should expect that it would give those details which an observer would notice, but which would certainly be omitted by a copyist. Almost everyone when he describes something which he has seen puts in details which are not relevant to the narrative. I would, then, secondly, ask whether the narrative gives us a coherent account of the life of our Lord; and, thirdly, whether it corresponds with the external conditions, political and geographical, which the narrative implies?[1]

Let us take the first point. If you will take the trouble to read carefully the narrative of S. Mark, and to notice the number of small, often picturesque, details which are contained in S. Mark, and omitted by S. Matthew, you will find it very instructive. S. Matthew, you will find, always wishes to keep his narrative as short as possible in order to make room for the teaching that he records at length. Consequently almost every narrative is curtailed, and the teaching constantly expanded. That, I believe, is the main reason of the differences between S. Matthew and S. Mark, and I do not believe there is any dogmatic purpose in S. Matthew's alterations.

[1] I must express here my obligations to *The Gospel History and its Transmission*, by F. Crawford Burkitt, M.A., F.B.A., Norrisian Professor of Divinity in the University of Cambridge. Edinburgh, 1906.

Let us compare, first of all, the two narratives of the healing of the Paralytic.

MATT. ix. 1-8.	MARK ii. 1-12.
1. And he entered into a boat, and crossed over, and came into his own city.	1. And when he entered again into Capernaum after some days, *it was noised that he was in the house.*
	2. *And many were gathered together, so that there was no longer room for them, no, not even about the door: and he spake the word unto them.*
2. And behold, they brought to him a man sick of the palsy, lying on a bed:	3. And they come, bringing unto him a man sick of the palsy, *borne of four.*
	4. *And when they could not come nigh unto him for the crowd, they uncovered the roof where he was: and when they had broken it up, they let down the bed whereon the sick of the palsy lay.*
and Jesus seeing their faith said unto the sick of the palsy, Son, be of good cheer; thy sins are forgiven.	5. And Jesus seeing their faith saith unto the sick of the palsy, Son, thy sins are forgiven.
3. And behold, certain of the scribes said within themselves, This man blasphemeth.	6. But there were certain of the scribes *sitting there*, and reasoning in their hearts,
	7. Why doth this man thus speak? he blasphemeth: *who can forgive sins but one, even God?*
4. And Jesus knowing their thoughts said, Wherefore think ye evil in your hearts?	8. And straightway Jesus, perceiving in his spirit that they so reasoned within themselves, saith unto them, Why

5. For whether is easier, to say, Thy sins are forgiven: or to say, Arise, and walk?

6. But that ye may know that the Son of man hath power on earth to forgive sins (then saith he to the sick of the palsy), Arise, and take up thy bed, and go unto thy house.

7. And he arose, and departed to his house.

8. But when the multitude saw it, they were afraid, and glorified God, which had given such power unto men.

reason ye these things in your hearts?

9. Whether is easier, to say to the sick of the palsy, Thy sins are forgiven; or to say, Arise, and take up thy bed, and walk?

10. But that ye may know that the Son of man hath power on earth to forgive sins (he saith to the sick of the palsy)

11. I say unto thee, Arise, take up thy bed, and go unto thy house.

12. And he arose, *and straightway took up the bed, and went forth before them all;* insomuch that they were all amazed, and glorified God, saying, We never saw it on this fashion.

Then in the next chapter:

"And when he had looked round about on them with anger, being grieved at the hardening of their heart. . . ."[1]

Or again:

"And he spake to his disciples that a little boat should wait on him because of the crowd, lest they should throng him."[2]

And again:

"And he cometh into a house. And the multitude cometh together again, so that they could not so much as eat bread."[3]

[1] Mark iii. 5. [2] *Ibid.*, iii. 9. [3] *Ibid.*, iii. 19.

Or read the story in the fifth chapter of the raising of Jairus's daughter, first in S. Mark and then in S. Matthew, and you will notice the difference of the narrative:

MATT. ix. 18-26.

18. While he spake these things unto them, behold, there came a ruler, and worshipped him, saying, My daughter is even now dead: but come and lay thy hand upon her and she shall live.

19. And Jesus arose and followed him, and so did his disciples.

20. And behold a woman which had an issue of blood twelve years, came behind him and touched the border of his garment; for she said within herself,

21. If I do but touch his garment, I shall be made whole.

MARK v. 21-43.

21. *And when Jesus had crossed over again in the boat unto the other side, a great multitude was gathered unto him: and he was by the sea.*

22. And there cometh one of the rulers *of the synagogue, Jairus by name; and seeing him,* he falleth at his feet,

23. and beseecheth him much, saying, My *little* daughter is at the point of death; I pray thee, that thou come and lay thy hands on her, that she may be made whole, and live.

24. And he went with him; *and a great multitude followed him, and they thronged him.*

25. And a woman which had an issue of blood twelve years

26. *and had suffered many things of many physicians, and had spent all that she had, and was nothing bettered, but rather grew worse.*

27. *Having heard the things concerning Jesus,* came in the crowd behind, and touched his garment.

28. For she said, If I touch but his garments, I shall be made whole.

22. But Jesus turning and seeing her said, Daughter, be of good cheer; thy faith hath made thee whole. *And the woman was made whole from that hour.*

29. *And straightway the fountain of her blood was dried up; and she felt in her body that she was healed of her plague.*

30. *And straightway Jesus, perceiving in himself that the power proceeding from him had gone forth,* turned him about in the crowd, *and said, Who touched my garments?*

31. *And his disciples said unto him, Thou seest the multitude thronging thee, and sayest thou, Who touched me?*

32. *And he looked round about to see her that had done this thing.*

33. *But the woman fearing and trembling, knowing what had been done to her, came and fell down before him, and told him all the truth.*

34. And he said unto her, Daughter, thy faith hath made thee whole; go in peace, and be whole of thy plague.

35. *While he yet spake, they came from the ruler of the synagogue's house, saying, Thy daughter is dead; why troublest thou the Master any further?*

36. *But Jesus, not heeding the word spoken, saith unto the ruler of the synagogue, Fear not, only believe.*

37. *And he suffered no man to follow with him, save Peter, and James, and John the brother of James.*

23. And when Jesus came into the ruler's house, and *saw the flute players,* and the crowd making a tumult,

24. he said, Give place for the damsel is not dead but sleepeth.

And they laughed him to scorn.

25. But when the crowd was put forth, he entered in, and took her by the hand; and the damsel arose.

26. *And the fame hereof went forth into all that land.*

38. And they came to the house of the ruler of the synagogue; and he beholdeth a tumult, *and many weeping and wailing greatly.*

39. And when he was entered in, *he saith unto them, Why make ye a tumult and weep?* The child is not dead, but sleepeth.

40. And they laughed him to scorn. *But he, having put them all forth, taketh the father of the child and her mother and them that were with him, and goeth in where the child was.*

41. And taking the child by the hand, he saith unto her, *Talitha cumi; which is, being interpreted, Damsel, I say unto thee, Arise.*

42. And straightway the damsel rose up, *and walked; for she was twelve years old. And they were amazed straightway with a great amazement.*

43. *And he charged them much that no man should know this; and he commanded that something should be given her to eat.*

I am going to take one more instance, which I think is interesting. I have said that I believe the story of the Feeding of the Five Thousand and that of the Feeding of the Four Thousand are two independent accounts of the same event. The first, I believe, comes from the memoirs of S. Peter, the other from some other source. Now, on that

hypothesis, I would ask you to compare the two narratives. You will notice at once that the former fits into the story. There is an entirely natural sequence of events.

"And he said unto them, Come ye yourselves apart into a desert place and rest a while: for there were many coming and going, and they had no leisure so much as to eat. And they departed into a desert place by ship privately. And the people saw them going, and many knew him, and they ran there together on foot from all the cities and outwent them."

The second narrative is all in the air; it has no place. It begins:

"In those days the multitude being very great and having nothing to eat. . . ."

The whole account of the discussion of the disciples is put very shortly, and the details about sitting down are entirely omitted:

"And he commanded them to make all sit down by companies upon the green grass. And they sat down in ranks, by hundreds, and by fifties."

Now, the reference to the green grass was certainly authentic, for it corresponds with the date of the event. It shows that this must have happened in the early spring, the only time when there is green grass in Palestine, and S. John tells us that it was just before the Passover that the event took place.

Let us now compare the narratives in detail.

MARK viii. 1-9.

1. In those days, when there was again a great multitude, and they had nothing to eat, he called unto him his disciples, and saith unto them,

2. I have compassion on the multitude, because they continue with me now three days, and have nothing to eat:

3. and if I send them away fasting to their home, they will faint in the way: and some of them are come from far.

4. And his disciples answered him, Whence shall one be able to fill these men with bread here in a desert place?

MARK vi. 30-44.

30. *And the apostles gather themselves together unto Jesus; and they told him all things, whatsoever they had done, and whatsoever they had taught.*

31. *And he saith unto them, Come ye yourselves apart into a desert place, and rest a while. For there were many coming and going, and they had no leisure so much as to eat.*

32. *And they went away in the boat to a desert place apart.*

33. *And the people saw them going, and many knew them, and they ran there together on foot from all the cities, and outwent them.*

34. And he came forth and saw a great multitude, and he had compassion on them, *because they were as sheep not having a shepherd: and he began to teach them many things.*

35. *And when the day was now far spent, his disciples came unto him, and said, The place is desert, and the day is now far spent:*

36. *send them away, that they may go into the country and villages round about, and buy themselves somewhat to eat.*

37. *But he answered and said unto them, Give ye them to eat.* And they say unto him, Shall we go and buy *two hundred pennyworth of bread*, and give them to eat?

5. And he asked them, How many loaves have ye? And they said, Seven.

6. And he commandeth the multitude to sit down on the ground:

and he took the seven loaves, and having given thanks, he brake, and gave to his disciples to set before them, and they set them before the multitude.

7. And they had a few small fishes: and having blessed them, he commanded to set these also before them.

8. And they did eat and were filled: and they took up, of broken pieces that remained over, seven baskets.

9. And they were about four thousand; and he sent them away.

38. And he saith unto them, How many loaves have ye? go and see. And when they knew, they say, Five, and two fishes.

39. And he commanded them that all should sit down *by companies upon the green grass.*

40. *And they sat down in ranks, by hundreds, and by fifties.*

41. And he took the five loaves and the two fishes, and looking up to heaven, he blessed, and brake the loaves; and he gave to the disciples to set before them; and the two fishes divided he among them all.

42. And they did all eat, and were filled.

43. And they took up broken pieces, twelve basketfuls, and also of the fishes.

44. And they that ate the loaves were five thousand men.

Now, no doubt it is possible to exaggerate the significance of these details, but I am convinced that when you read many of these narratives in S. Mark you will feel that you are reading the story as told by someone who saw it and described it as he saw it. It may be that he was a good story-teller, and you must not entirely exclude that hypothesis; but when I have a tradition that the narrative in S. Mark comes from S. Peter, who was present at most of these events, and when on

reading the narrative I find that the narrative reads as if it comes from someone who had been present, I note the coincidence.

And now let me come to the second point. I shall only touch upon this very shortly, as the strength of our position will, I believe, come out more strongly in my next lecture, when I try and narrate more fully the account of our Lord's life. I will only put to you now the main points as they appear to me. In the first place, the correct sequence of events can be gathered from S. Mark. It is often obscured both in S. Matthew and in S. Luke—in S. Matthew because he groups together events and teaching according to their subject-matter, a very admirable thing to do from many points of view: in S. Luke because he has information from more than one source, and often finds a difficulty in fitting it together. The chronological difficulties in the Acts arise, I think, from the same cause. S. Luke did not always know how to piece together information derived from different sources, and has sometimes told us two stories when he really had two narratives of the same event. Then, if you look at the smaller details, you will often find that there are slight mistakes in S. Matthew and in S. Luke, and that in some cases these mistakes have been transferred by the scribes to the ordinary text of S. Mark.

Now, I think we can quite clearly make out the following stages in the life of Jesus as recorded by S. Mark. First, the opening of the ministry in Capernaum. This is the narrative by S. Peter of the events at the beginning of his career which had

impressed themselves so strongly on his mind. Is it wonderful that it should be so? Secondly, there is the period of successful preaching in Capernaum, in the villages round the Lake, and, at least on two occasions, in extended circles through Galilee. Then, thirdly, there is the growth of opposition, which is put before us in a series of stories illustrating the way in which Jesus comes in conflict with the official religion of the country. This leads to a breach—how deep we cannot say—with the synagogue, and Jesus begins to organize His own community, the Church of the Messiah. Then comes the mission of the Apostles—a movement which immediately makes the action of Jesus appear much more formidable to the authorities. The return of the twelve corresponds with the news that comes of the death of John the Baptist, which serves as a warning to Jesus. He also probably receives definite notice that Herod is going to kill Him, and so He goes in a ship to the other side of the Sea of Galilee. Then the event of feeding the multitude occurs, when, as S. John tells us, they tried to make Him King. This must have had the appearance of a definite insurrection and must have heightened the danger to which Jesus was exposed. As a result, Jesus retires for some considerable time to the regions of Tyre and Sidon and then to the Decapolis, avoiding the danger of Herod. This was perhaps a period of the training of the disciples, and continued until the confession of Peter at Cæsarea Philippi. The disciples have recognized Him as Messiah, and now He turns His thoughts to Jerusalem. He passes secretly through Galilee,

and then began a preaching mission through Judæa and Peræa. Then comes the end. We must look at the details later. I will only put this to you—that it is a coherent story and one which could not have been the result of a later compilation put together by a person who was not present out of a number of scattered narratives.

And now I come to the third point—that this narrative harmonizes with the political and geographical conditions of the time. The fact that we have to remember is this: the real danger to Jesus came from Herod Antipas. Herod ruled in Galilee and in Peræa, but the whole of the eastern side of the Sea of Galilee was either in the territory of his brother Philip, a very different sort of person, or of the Greek cities of the Decapolis, and in either of these districts Jesus would be safe. So we find Him crossing over the Lake to a retired place for safety, probably in the neighbourhood of Bethsaida, which was in the territory of Philip. Then, when adverse winds blow the disciples to the country of Gennesareth, which was dangerously near Tiberias, and His coming is made the occasion for a popular demonstration, He retires into the country of the North, the regions of Tyre and Sidon, where again He is safe. If you were to call it a flight, you would not be using very much exaggerated language. Afterwards we hear of Him in the Decapolis, at Bethsaida, and at Cæsarea Philippi, all outside the territory of Herod, and He does not again return to Galilee except for the sake of passing through it, which He does in secret; then He begins to preach when He enters the Roman province of Judæa.

You read that "Jesus went forth from thence," that is, from the territory of Philip, "and passed through Galilee; and he would not that any man should know it."[1] But after He has left Galilee you read, "And he arose from thence," that is Capernaum, where He had been staying privately, "and cometh into the regions of Judæa and beyond the Jordan, and multitudes came together to Him *again*, and as He was wont He taught them *again*."[2] Jesus leaves Galilee, He enters the Roman province of Judæa, which included Samaria, and immediately His public preaching begins again. He is out of the territory of Herod. Now, I venture to think that this correspondence with the territorial conditions of the country shows us that we are dealing with an historical narrative.

I have, of course, only been able to touch on a few points, but I would venture to suggest to you in conclusion that an examination of the narrative of S. Mark gives us no reason for doubting that it comes in its main details from one who, like S. Peter, was describing events at which he had been present, and that it is most unlikely that if the Galilean narrative had been compiled at a later date in accordance with theological presuppositions, it would have contained so probable a narrative and one so accurate in its political and geographical details.

IV

We now come to the question of the authenticity of the teaching. Here we are not concerned pre-

[1] Mark ix. 30. [2] *Ibid.*, x. 1.

eminently with S. Mark's Gospel. That Gospel does indeed include teaching, and early teaching, but it may be doubted whether it is the oldest source. *The Discourses* were probably written down earlier. Nor need we consider that information which is not contained in either of these sources is necessarily inferior. S. Luke tells us that there were many who had attempted to write about the beginnings of the Christian faith, and we have no reason to think that information contained in documents we do not now possess was therefore untrustworthy; in fact, in many cases S. Luke's version of a saying often seems to bear more clearly the marks of originality. This is true also of S. Matthew's Gospel. There is no reason why teaching contained in it, and in it only, should necessarily be later. Much of the special teaching that he gives seems to me equal in authority to the rest of his information. Our point of view rather should be that we have in the record of the Synoptic Gospels the tradition of our Lord's teaching as it was delivered in the Church between the years A.D. 30 and 70, little, if at all, influenced by the events and history of primitive Christianity.

Now what are the criteria by which we can judge whether it is authentic or not? I will take the following three points. First, its religious terminology is such as would harmonize with the reputed time of our Lord's life, and there is little or nothing inconsistent with that time. Secondly, it belongs for the most part to Galilee and not to Jerusalem; it comes from one who had been brought up under such conditions as those in which our Lord lived. Thirdly, it has the stamp of coming from one mind.

It has throughout the impress of one of remarkable spiritual and intellectual distinction.

Take the first point. It has been pointed out what a tremendous change must have been created by the fall of Jerusalem. Now throughout the scenery, the life, the thoughts, the ideas of the Gospel are those of Palestine before that event. More than that, they are those of Palestine before the changes and disturbances which led up to the great rebellion. There is, except, perhaps, in one or two places in S. Matthew's Gospel, no shadow of the fall of Jerusalem over it. It is the Palestine of Herod Antipas and of Pontius Pilate, of the Sadducees and Pharisees, of the order of life of a period when people were not thinking of rebellion. Further than this, we have a considerable amount of information from various sources concerning the theological ideas of the time. There were definite religious problems and a definite religious phraseology. There was the hope of the Kingdom and the hope of the Messiah. There were the questions which turned on the relation to the Roman rule and the duty of paying tribute. There were expressions used like "Son of man" and the "Son of God." Now if we read through the Synoptic Gospels we shall find there are few or no anachronisms in them. Occasionally in parts of S. Luke there may be a certain amount of language which would suggest a later period, but for the most part there is nothing which could not have been said, so far as the language and the forms of expression go, by one who lived in Palestine at the time when Jesus was said to have lived there. Now that argument is one

of great force. At the time when the Gospels were written no writer was free from the influence of his surroundings, and if we find that S. Luke, for example, who wrote after the fall of Jerusalem, gives us, with the exception of a few incidental phrases here and there, language of a period earlier than his own, the conclusion must be that there were authentic and trustworthy sources for his information.

Now, secondly, I come to an argument which for me has great weight. Our Lord's utterances are those of a man who has lived and grown up in Galilee. We all know how constantly the language reflects the country. The sheep and the shepherd, the goats, the sower and the seed, the lilies of the field, the mountain stream, the vineyard—how constantly they occur! We do not have merely an occasional reference to country life, as once or twice in S. Paul, but constant allusions, fresh, natural, and spontaneous. The life is the life of the country and the country town, not that of a city like Jerusalem—the rich householder, the man who plants a vineyard, the children in the market-place, the village spring. How different are the Gospels, especially the Synoptic Gospels, to almost any other literature![1]

And then, thirdly, there is the evidence of a distinct personality. There are certain definite characteristics in the teaching which imply a mind and purpose behind it. This will become more apparent as we proceed. Just as the reconstruction of the history will make apparent the general authenticity

[1] I have worked out this at much greater length in *The Life and Teaching of Jesus the Christ*, pp. 101-106.

of the narrative, so the analysis of the theology will make apparent the originality of the thought. But a few of the main lines may be here stated. The basis of the teaching is the Old Testament. It is true, of course, that there is, as has been suggested, a certain analogy in phraseology with the current literature of Judaism, or, perhaps, to put it more correctly, with the religion which had been created by that literature or, at any rate, reflected it. But the great bulk of the thought of Jesus is on a different plane. It is based on and rises out of the great ideas of the Old Testament—God, Righteousness, and Judgment. But while it arises out of the Old Testament it continually advances beyond it. It seizes on the deepest spiritual ideas and not on what is transitory and earthly, and it transforms these ideas while it reproduces them. It starts from the great principles of God and Righteousness and Judgment, but the teaching of the New Testament on all these things transcends that of the Old. The God of the New Testament, the Righteousness of the New Testament, are transformed. Judgment has become something far more spiritual. So, too, the ideas of the Kingdom of the Messiah arise from the Old Testament, but in both cases there is a new departure.[1]

[1] It is interesting to see how a writer who approaches the study of the teaching of Jesus from a very different angle finds the same evidence of one personality. "Were the reactions of so unique a religious personality only emotional, or did Jesus have also a unique intellectual insight? There is no question in my mind that Christ's deep conviction that His is the Way and the Truth was based on knowledge—intellectual knowledge, scientific knowledge, if you please. Before He felt that He was the Redeemer, He knew Himself to be the great Discoverer. Of

Now, if all these things are true, and I think they are, do not they inevitably take us back to the teaching of one teacher, and do not all the characteristics which we demand meet in the Person of Jesus of Nazareth?

V

We are now ready to deal with a problem which has been put prominently before us in the following dictum, that S. Mark's Gospel "is far more a primary authority for the thought of the Apostolic age than for the life of Jesus." Now I venture to think that a sweeping statement of this sort ought not to be made without some adequate proof being adduced in its favour, and I must own that I have found very little argument put forward in support

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course, this is a modern mode of expression. We in the twentieth century talk and think of *our* discoveries, of our personal achievements; but to Jesus a concrete and intellectual insight was a gift of God. Truth could only come from the source of all truth; from the Father that is in heaven." And of the Gospels he writes: "True, they are largely teachings of conduct. True, they are sayings addressed to men and women from whom much could not be expected intellectually. True, there is no attempt at a philosophical and theological dissertation; and yet there was no need for followers of Christ to go to an Aristotle for philosophy. For a greater than Aristotle is there in the very sayings as they have been recorded, and have come down to us in the Gospels. What is a philosopher? A lover of wisdom, it means philologically. And what is wisdom? A relative insight into truth—very relative indeed. What, then, shall we call Christ, who knew that he had not a relative but an absolute insight? Moreover, use all your modern little scientific standards, and you cannot get away from the fact that Christ's insight was one which future generations may rediscover but can never upset" (*Toward the Understanding of Jesus*, by Vladimir G. Simkhovitch, Professor of Economic History, Columbia University, pp. 57-59).

of it. The assertion by itself has been deemed sufficient. But even although it has not been supported by argument it still challenges us, and we are bound to ask: Can we show that it is not true?

Let us admit at once that there are two things which are true. The first is that few intelligent people write a book without reference to the thought of their own time. I, for example, am obviously bound, if I am to be of any use to you, to give you my conception of the life and teaching of Jesus in relation to the living problems that trouble you at the present day. And it is quite true that all the Evangelists did this to a certain extent, although I think we may say S. Mark less than others. In S. Mark there are considerable signs that a good deal is simple narrative—the telling of a story in a particular way because it is in that way that the story happened. Then, secondly, it is true that few people can write anything without being influenced to a certain extent by the language and phraseology of the times in which they live, and there may be some elements of this in S. Mark, although I am bound to say that they seem to me exceedingly slight. But even if both these things be so, it does not mean that the subject-matter of the teaching or the detail of the history has necessarily been invented.

It may be true, then, that to a certain extent the language of the Gospel has been influenced by the environment in which it was written, and that in recording the words of Jesus the Evangelists were not unaffected by the needs of their contemporaries, but is the subject-matter of the Gospels such as would be composed during the first two generations

of the Christian Church? We know quite well what the theology of S. Paul was, and the problems with which he and his contemporaries were concerned. His public career began about the year A.D. 50. We can reconstruct fairly well what the theology of the Church was for the twenty years immediately preceding that date. S. Paul tells us what were the lessons that he had learnt from his predecessors. "I delivered unto you," he says, "that which also I received, how that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures; and that he was buried; and that he hath been raised on the third day according to the Scriptures."[1] This he describes as the Gospel which he received and preached. We have also, in the early chapters of the Acts of the Apostles, a sketch of the primitive Christian teaching contained in the speeches of S. Peter. This is obviously more primitive than the teaching of S. Paul, and I see no reason for doubting that in its main lines it is accurate. From these sources we learn what were the fundamental ideas of the Church of the Apostles, and we find that all their teaching is coloured by the great facts of the Crucifixion, the Resurrection, and the coming of the Spirit. When we turn to the Gospels we find, it is true, a certain amount of reference to these things, and it is a matter for careful consideration whether these references are genuine or not; but the bulk of the teaching is concerned with quite different problems. Between the times of the Gospel and the times of the Apostles certain great events had intervened—the Death of Jesus, His

[1] 1 Cor. xv. 3, 4

Resurrection, the coming of the Spirit—and these events had changed the religious problems for the Early Church. They preserved and remembered the words of the Lord; it was on His teaching that they modelled their life and conduct; but the language that He used, the problems that He discussed, the environment in which He lived, were quite different from theirs. Had the teaching in the Gospels been the creation of the first or second generation of Christians it would have been written in quite a different way.

And then there is a further point that I shall ask you to consider. You will have to find some cause which explains the growth of the new Christian life. Part of it, no doubt, was learnt from the Old Testament; much was learnt by pondering over the facts of Christ's Death and His Resurrection, but the Death of Jesus would have no significance unless there had been a life of Jesus before His death, and the transformation of life and thought which meets us in all Christian literature must have had some origin. We have in the life and teaching of Jesus an adequate and sufficient cause for the conception formed of the Person of Jesus and a sufficient explanation of the new teaching.

To those, then, who deny the historical character of the documents which narrate the life of Christ, we may reply that they give us a coherent and consistent narrative of events; that they contain the record of a teaching harmonious with the period to which it belongs, unaffected, or but slightly affected, by the development of Christian history; that they present to us a person whose character

and message are unique; and that they form an adequate cause for the events which followed them. We are ready to listen to reasoned arguments against our conviction, but we fail to find in the rationalistic reconstructions of Christian history any sufficient explanation of the phenomena of Christianity.

VI

I must now turn to the fourth Gospel, the Gospel usually called that of S. John. The facts that we know about it are that it was quite early ascribed to a writer of the name of John, and that this John was identified with the son of Zebedee, that on external grounds it cannot have been written much later than 100 A.D., and that the author of it appears to have been acquainted with the other three Gospels.

When we turn to examine its contents we find a good deal, at any rate at first sight, which causes us difficulties. There are marked differences from the other Gospels. It has not the characteristics which have impressed us so favourably in the case of S. Mark and in the teaching of the Synoptic Gospels. It would be extremely difficult to construct out of it a coherent account of our Lord's ministry. It shows no particular knowledge of the particular conditions of the time which it describes. If you compare its language with that of the other Gospels it seems to fail just where they succeed. It avoids for the most part the phraseology in the Synoptic Gospels which seems so primitive, and uses language which was not indeed impossible in our Lord's time, but which we may say quite definitely is not the sort of language

that He would have written. It does not, for example, often use such a phrase as "the Kingdom of God"; it talks rather of "life" and "eternal life."

If we turn to our modern critics and ask their help we are really no better off. There is nothing that they tell us about which we can be certain. At one time we were told that it is Hellenic throughout. Now writers are more and more agreed that the basis of its language and thought is Aramaic; it is even suggested that it was originally written in that language. Some look upon it as allegorical and spiritual throughout, holding that none or few of the facts are true, and suggesting that if they are true, they have authority as spiritual documents, but not as historical. Others, on the other hand, would feel that in various points this Gospel gives us more exact evidence even than S. Mark. It is very difficult to find any way out.

I should like to try and put before you what seem to me clear points. In the first place, it was written with a definite dogmatic purpose.

"Many other signs therefore did Jesus in the presence of the disciples which are not written in this book, but these are written, that ye may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that believing, ye may have life in his name."[1]

But a dogmatic purpose is quite compatible with historical accuracy, especially if the purpose be a correct one. It only means that the material will be selected and arranged to suit the purpose, and that the writing is not merely for the sake of giving

[1] John xx. 30, 31.

us a history. For instance, the story of the cleansing of the Temple may have been put at the beginning of the Gospel as a clear and definite sign of the claim of Jesus, without regard to its chronological position.

Then, secondly, the teaching of the fourth Gospel is throughout translated into a language suited to a later time. This again is quite compatible with the accuracy of its teaching in all essential points. If the writer speaks of "life" or "eternal life" instead of "the Kingdom of Heaven," he is only doing what we find done in the Synoptic Gospels themselves and what Jesus Himself occasionally did. He used the language which would best interpret his meaning. As a matter of fact, while the language is not that of the Synoptic Gospels, there is a singular absence of any phrases which can definitely be called later. For example, the expression "the Word" which occurs in the Prologue is not found throughout the teaching. There is not any of the language of later theology or later Church life.

Then, thirdly, the writer seems to have a tendency to pass from the words of our Lord to his own comment on them, and it is not always possible to distinguish when he does this. When, after the speech of our Lord to Nicodemus, he writes: "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth on him should not perish, but have eternal life,"[1] is he not giving his own teaching in order to explain the meaning of the words of Jesus? If it had been customary in ancient

[1] John iii. 16.

times to use inverted commas, should we not clearly have understood what he was doing?

Now, all these things are true, but it does not follow that therefore the history is to be neglected. The author makes, for example, the narrative of Feeding the Five Thousand the basis of a long discourse. The story appears in the main to have been derived from S. Mark, but details are added which have all the marks of truth. Is it necessary to believe that he simply invents, as some would have us believe, such other information as he gives us, and that when there seems no particular reason for doing so? Was he not perhaps correct in telling us that the first examination of Jesus was in the house of Annas and not in that of the High Priest? And is it not possible that the writer of the Gospel had better means of knowing what was happening in Jerusalem? Why should he have invented a point like that? And is it not probable that he is right about the date of the Crucifixion and not the Synoptists? Would the authorities have allowed Jesus to be crucified on the first day of the Feast? Was it not part of their plan to get rid of Jesus before He could declare Himself at the Feast, for if He had done so and had had the multitudes on His side, what could they have done?

Or take again the following passages:

"The hour is come that the Son of man should be glorified. Verily, verily, I say unto you, except a grain of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth by itself, but if it die it beareth much fruit. He that loveth his life loseth it; and he that hateth his life in this world shall keep it

unto life eternal. If any man serve me, let him follow me; and where I am, there shall also my servant be; if any man serve me, him will the Father honour. Now is my soul troubled, and what shall I say? Father, save me from this hour; but for this cause came I unto this hour."[1]

Now this is based on authentic words of Jesus which we possess in the other Gospels, so are other passages, and may it not be the case that elsewhere there is a similar source which we do not possess?

To sum up, we cannot use the fourth Gospel as a substitute for the other Gospels, but I think we may us it with discretion to supplement them. I think it is quite possible that there was that closer connection between Jesus and John the Baptist that we learn from this Gospel. I think it is more than probable that Jesus went up to Jerusalem at other times than at the last Passover. I think it is extremely probable that He was preaching in Jerusalem during the winter before His Death. The story of Lazarus helps to explain the sequence of the final events. There are details in the story of the Passion as told by the fourth Gospel which we may be prepared to use. And if all this be so, is it impossible that there was a beloved disciple, perhaps closely connected with Jerusalem, who, if not the author of the fourth Gospel, yet provided the material out of which the Gospel was constructed?[2]

[1] John xii. 23-27.

[2] For further investigations on S. John's Gospel see the *Church Quarterly Review* for October, 1925.

VII

I have now surveyed the main sources of our knowledge of the life of our Lord. I do not think that for our present purpose we need dwell on the information, which is little more than corroborative, which we can extract from the study of the other Canonical Scriptures and from fragments of tradition and records of teaching ascribed to our Lord found elsewhere. The whole bulk of it adds little of importance to our knowledge.

I would, in conclusion, emphasize certain points to you. The first is that, looking at the material that we have before us, I would suggest to you that we must not approach the life of our Lord with the excessive scepticism which some have displayed; that we have sources—fragmentary, it is true, but still very comprehensive—describing to us the ministry and the teaching of Jesus; that on all grounds of external criticism they are as authentic and trustworthy as are most of the materials of ancient history; that they will stand the test of a fair critical examination, and may be used with confidence if with discretion. I say this, being quite aware of the opposite conclusion some have reached; but when I turn to the many critical objections to our Lord's life, I notice two things. First, there is an amazing amount of difference of opinion. If there were sound critical objections behind the rationalistic point of view there would be some unanimity of agreement, but there is none; and the reason of this is that the cause of disbelief is not really the criticism, but is *a priori*. The criticism

is only used to support a belief already formed on other grounds. The supernatural character of our Lord's life and work is not disbelieved because the evidence for it is not good; the evidence is disbelieved because it contains statements which the rationalist thinks that he cannot accept. He does not believe that Jesus is the Son of God, and therefore he must disbelieve the documents which show us that that is what He is.

Then, secondly, I would remind you that in the lectures that follow we shall be continually testing our material. If we construct a reasonable account of the life and death of Christ, if we have a coherent doctrine and teaching, if we have a Personality which has consistent and distinctive traits, then the probability is that our material is good.

And then, thirdly, we have to remember that our task is to account for the beginnings of Christianity and the history of the Christian Church. We have a sufficient knowledge of what the character of the first generation of Christian teaching was. We can trace its differences, its marvellous differences, from the conceptions which preceded it. What adequate explanation can we give of it? And we can trace the power and authority of Christianity in the world. We must have an adequate explanation to give of these facts.

LECTURE II

THE LIFE OF JESUS OF NAZARETH

THE LIFE OF JESUS OF NAZARETH

It was in the year A.D. 29, the fifteenth year of the Emperor Tiberius, that our story begins. If we count from the Battle of Actium, the Roman Empire had now existed for fifty years, and it may be doubted whether at any time the material conditions of peace and commercial prosperity had been greater throughout the civilized world which was governed from the Palatine Hill. The frontiers were guarded everywhere by the legions—still loyal, still Roman. If a disaster happened in Germany, if the Parthian menace was never quite absent, it did not bring much anxiety except to the statesman or the prophet. Sea and land were policed as never before. Customs and taxation had ceased to be burdensome and oppressive. Religious freedom seemed to be established. There were still memories of a great literary epoch, and there was a widespread, if somewhat shallow, culture. The nations were learning to know one another and to mingle with one another.

And the land of Palestine, too, was prosperous. Herod the Great had established peace and order and commercial prosperity. It was the highway through which all the land commerce of the East

passed. Under Herod Antipas—a clever if not a good man—Galilee was rich and peaceful. Philip, beyond Jordan, was a just and mild ruler. The cities of the Decapolis enjoyed their Greek life under the ægis of the Empire. Judæa was kept quiet by Pontius Pilate, and those who were without a conscience might enjoy the gifts of material peace. But, unfortunately for its lower aims, the Jewish nation had a conscience which sometimes became a strongly perverted one, and religion, when it is suppressed and perverted, can become something very dangerous. The wilder spirits considered that the paying of a tax to a foreign ruler was a matter of conscience, and although their attempted revolt had been suppressed for a time, there were zealous and bitter feelings prevailing which a foolish and oppressive Government would ultimately stir up to fury. Wealth, a desire for leisure, and subservience to foreign rulers, had turned the priesthood of the God of Israel into a proud aristocracy whose interest it was to support the Roman rule, and who lived on the piety of the people. Owing to a natural reaction against foreign customs and sacerdotal infidelity, religion became hard and rugged and external. The Sadducee created the Pharisee. And it produced also the asceticism of the Essene. There were, indeed, many pious Jews who, in faith and hope, waited for the consolation of Israel, but such piety lies hidden. Had the Jews, like the other nations, been content to give up their religious exclusiveness, their consciousness of their destiny, and their moral ideals, they might have lived a corrupt, a prosperous, and a decadent life

under a foreign despotism. They could not do that, and so there came for the nation and for the more wilful death and disaster and destruction, but for those whose heart and aims were open to the Spirit of God, the leadership in the high destiny of the peoples of the world.

I

In the year 29, perhaps in the late summer or autumn, came the first response, had they known it, to the needs of the nation and the cries of the devout —the preaching of John the Baptist. It is not necessary for me to examine his life and teaching in detail. You know the circumstances well. All I need do is to emphasize the leading features of his message. The fundamental fact to remember is that he was a true prophet in the succession of the Prophets of Israel, and that he was recognized to be that by the people. For more than 400 years there had been no one who might be held to be a true prophet. There had been scribes and wise men; there had been heroic leaders and apocalyptic dreamers, but a man who had the divine inspiration of a prophet there had not been. "But all men counted John as a prophet." As a prophet he had a double message—he was the preacher of righteousness and the messenger of the Messiah. His teaching was that of the old Prophets, the true ethical religion of Israel—the message that God was righteous, and that what He demanded of the people was righteousness, and that righteousness did not mean, as many seemed to teach, a tenacious adherence

to the privileges of Israel nor the due maintenance of the Temple and its sacrifices, as the Sadducees held, nor a scrupulous adherence to the Law, as the Pharisees thought, nor wearing white clothes and having a ritualism of their own, as the Essenes taught; but as the Prophets had said: "Wash you, make you clean; put away the evil of your doings from before mine eyes; cease to do evil; learn to do well; seek judgment, relieve the oppressed, judge the fatherless, plead for the widow."[1]

And the motive was the coming of the Messiah. Just as John had learnt his message of righteousness from the sincere study of the Prophets of the Old Testament, which had told him of the failure of his own generation, so he learnt from them of the Messiah and the meaning of His coming. He came to judgment. "And even now is the axe laid unto the root of the trees; every tree, therefore, that bringeth not forth good fruit is hewn down, and cast into the fire."[2] And, therefore, the preparation for Him must be repentance and purification. The meaning of that rite of Baptism, which was looked upon as the most characteristic of John's life, which gave him his name, and was with modification of meaning adopted by Jesus as the universal rite of the Christian Church, was that it was a preparation for the Messiah. It had, no doubt, analogies with many religious customs. Washing in some form or another is a religious rite connected with almost every religion, but it was the language of prophetic preparation which inspired the action of the prophet. And the meaning of the rite was not merely ritual

[1] Isa. i. 16, 17. [2] Matt. iii. 10.

and ceremonial, not purely symbolical but sacramental, the inevitable accompaniment of an ethical and spiritual change. From the Prophets John had learnt that he must baptize with water, but that One who was to come would baptize with the Holy Spirit and with fire. Righteousness, preparation, purification, repentance, judgment were the burden of the Baptist's message.

II

All our authorities tell us that there was a close connection between John the Baptist and Jesus of Nazareth, and it is merely a perverse desire to be singular which has led to the attempt to write the history in another way.

Amongst those who came to hear John was a man of some thirty years of age. His name was Joshua, or in Greek, Jesus; a carpenter, the son of a carpenter, of a provincial town, Nazareth in Galilee. Like others who came to John, He would not only listen to the teaching of the prophet, but would have intimate talks with him. Those who were baptized confessed their sins. John would learn some of the deepest thoughts of Jesus and saw in Him the Messiah that was to come. Jesus was baptized, and, at His baptism, the convictions, the aspirations, the purpose which until then had been perhaps vague and inarticulate, became clear and definite. The heavens were opened to Him, He saw the Spirit of God descending like a Dove and lighting on Him, He heard the Voice saying: "This is my Son, my Beloved, in whom I am well

pleased"[1] He knew now His vocation. He had learnt in the Scriptures which He had studied so continually of the Son of God, the Messiah described in the Psalms; of the Servant, the Beloved One, described in Isaiah. He knew Himself now as anointed for His work; He knew that He was to fulfil in Himself all those lines of thought which He had learnt in the Scriptures, He was "to fulfil all righteousness."[2]

For a time Jesus preached and taught, as it might seem to the world, as a disciple of John. Some of John's disciples attached themselves to Him, and His teaching was already beginning to attract attention. People remarked that He baptized more disciples than John, and John, so far from resenting this, accepted the position. Jesus was beginning to fulfil His destiny which John had foreseen. "He that hath the bride is the bridegroom, but the friend of the bridegroom which standeth and heareth him rejoiceth greatly because of the bridegroom's voice: this my joy therefore is fulfilled. He must increase, but I must decrease."[3]

But all this must come to an end. The work of John must make way, as is so often the case, for something higher. When Herod Antipas was passing through Jerusalem on a journey to Rome he met there Herodias, the sister of Agrippa, and daughter of the ill-fated Aristobulus, who was Herod the Great's son by Mariamne, the last of the Asmonæans. Herodias was wife of the least known of Herod's sons who bore the name of Herod and perhaps of Philip. She had the beauty and distinction of the As-

[1] Matt. iii. 17. [2] *Ibid.*, iii. 15. [3] John iii. 29, 30.

monæans, the lust and ambition of a Herod. She desired the crown and Antipas desired her beauty. She deserted her husband for him. Herod's own wife, the daughter of Aretas, King of the Nabathæans, fled from her faithless husband, and Herodias became the wife of Antipas. To Jewish law this alliance, the parent of many evils, was not only adulterous but incestuous; and John, who feared nothing, publicly denounced it. Moreover, it made Herod unpopular with the people. Herod, to punish John for his boldness and to destroy his influence with the people who might have found in him a leader, and no doubt inspired by the evil passions of Herodias, seized John and threw him into prison. The result was inevitably to bring to an end his work. It meant the dispersal of his followers and their scattering to their own homes.

III

After John was cast into prison Jesus returned to His country of Galilee and there His ministry began. The place at which we find Him is Capernaum by the Sea of Galilee. Why He went there must be a matter of conjecture. Some have thought that His mother had gone to live there with her relations if, as is probable, Salome, wife of Zebedee, was her sister. I have suggested elsewhere that it was the purpose of Jesus to win His first disciples. Peter, Andrew, James, John had all been with Him disciples of the Baptist. Jesus is now consciously starting on His ministry, and He must first summon to Himself those who are already attached to Him, who had

been associated with Him and the Baptist, whose character and capacity He knew. All this must be conjecture. At any rate, Jesus' ministry began in Galilee, the country in which He had lived, and the scene of His ministry was the Sea of Galilee and the Jewish towns on its banks.

I must refer you to other places for a detailed description of that Lake and its surroundings. All that we can do now is to note certain characteristics which play some part in the ministry of Jesus. It had in the first place the physical characteristics which might fit it for such a ministry. Situated below the level of the sea, it was remarkable for its pleasant and genial climate. Even in winter to live and sleep in the open air would have been no great hardship for Jesus Himself or His followers or for the crowds which from distant places flocked to hear Him. Preaching in the open air on the shores of the Lake or on the slopes of the hills would be a pleasant and natural task. Then it was a place easy of access. Roads from Galilee, from Judæa in the south, from the regions beyond Jordan, from Tyre and Sidon, from more distant places, all converged there. When Jesus became famous and crowds came from many lands, there was no difficulty about approaching Him. I do not know whether we can lay much stress on the mixed population that undoubtedly inhabited the towns of the Lake—Greek, or what passed as Greek, Syrian, and Jewish. It is more important, I think, to dwell, as I have done already, on the security that was afforded by the different territories that came down to the Lake. While the whole of the west coast

was ruled by Herod Antipas, the east coast towards the north belonged to his brother Philip, to the south to the Greek cities of the Decapolis. A short journey in a boat would take any subject of Antipas whom he wished to persecute into a place of safety. We shall find Jesus undoubtedly using these advantages.

A vivid picture is presented to us of the beginning of the ministry. Peter tells us of the summons that came to him: "Come ye after me and I will make you to become fishers of men:"[1] of the preaching at Capernaum on the Sabbath, and of the revelation that it was to all who heard it. There was a new gospel. It was a revelation of a new leader, of a Personality more powerful than any they had yet known. Then came the new power over lunatic and madman, the healing that afternoon of Peter's wife's mother, the sudden concourse of people to experience the new power, and the retirement to a solitary place to pray.

So began the Galilean ministry. It lasted, as I believe, for about two years out of the three of Jesus' active life, from the spring of the year A.D. 30 to the spring of the year 32. Its centre was in the towns by the Lake, Capernaum, Bethsaida, Chorazin, in the fertile plain of Gennesareth and the many villages round; but at least twice there were long tours throughout Galilee. "And he went into their synagogues throughout all Galilee preaching and casting out devils."[2] "And he went from thence and he cometh into his own country."[3] "And he went round about the villages preaching."[4] It is probable that these tours corresponded to the

[1] Mark i. 17. [2] *Ibid.*, i. 39. [3] *Ibid.*, vi. 1. [4] *Ibid.*, vi. 6.

summer months, when the Lake country would be hot and travelling in the uplands of Galilee would be possible and pleasant.

There are a few points in this ministry that I would dwell on. The first is the fundamental purpose of the preaching. It was contained in the words, a continuation of the message of the Baptist, "The Kingdom of Heaven is at hand." The significance of this will appear as we proceed with our narrative.

Then, secondly, there was its immediate, its continuous and decisive success. As far as the people of Galilee are concerned, from the beginning they accepted Jesus, certainly as a prophet, ultimately probably as something more. "And the report of him went straightway everywhere unto all the region of Galilee round about."[1] "And all the city was gathered together at the door."[2] "And they found him and say unto him, All are seeking thee."[3] "And they came to him from every quarter."[4] "When he entered again into Capernaum . . . many were gathered together, so that there was no longer room for them."[5] "And a great multitude from Galilee followed; and from Judæa, and from Jerusalem, and from Idumæa, and beyond Jordan, and about Tyre and Sidon, a great multitude."[6] "And again he began to teach by the seaside. And there is gathered unto him a very great multitude, so that he entered into a boat and sat in the sea."[7] "And when Jesus had crossed over again in the boat unto the other side a great multitude was gathered unto him."[8] And the culmination comes in the narrative of the feeding of the multitude.

[1] Mark i. 28. [2] *Ibid.*, i. 33. [3] *Ibid.*, i. 37. [4] *Ibid.*, i. 45.
[5] *Ibid.*, ii. 1, 2. [6] *Ibid.*, iii. 7, 8. [7] *Ibid.*, iv. 1. [8] *Ibid.*, v. 21.

Then, thirdly, there was a steady growth of opposition. At first Jesus preached in the synagogues. He was a teacher of the Law, and people were anxious to hear Him, but gradually the differences between Him and the official religion developed. The first criticism arose apparently when He claimed to forgive sins. Then He showed a quite unaccustomed and most improper desire to mix with unpopular people, publicans and sinners, the hated tax-gatherer, the women of evil reputation; even perhaps with Greeks; and His plea that He came not to call the righteous but sinners to repentance did not seem to appease His critics. Perhaps they detected the latent irony. Then there were the troubles about fasting, and, above all, about the Sabbath. All these things quite naturally irritated the Pharisees. Here was a different and improper representation of religion. And the difference was much more fundamental than perhaps most people understood.

It was teaching like this which aroused against Him the anger of the Pharisees and of the stricter Jews. But there was another party who were watching Him also, the supporters, perhaps the officials, of Herod Antipas. And this implied other dangers. The tetrarch was not too popular, and was therefore in danger of a popular rising, and the two parties joined together and prepared for action with a result which we shall see as we proceed.

But these events had a further influence. Up to this time Jesus had taught habitually in the synagogue; henceforth He does that but seldom. It may be, as has been suggested, that He was

actually expelled from the synagogue. At any rate, the officials would not now be inclined to ask Him to preach. That meant the parting of the ways. It would be no longer possible to accomplish His work, as perhaps He had wished, through the Jewish Church. New wine would not go into old bottles, so new bottles were necessary. So Jesus appointed His twelve Apostles. This was the first step in the organization of the New Israel, the Church of the Messiah, and was, therefore, a step of grave significance. Their functions were primarily to be with Him, to attend to Him, to assist Him, and, above all, to learn from Him. A further function arose when they were sent out to preach, and we shall find that this mission of theirs leads to the great crisis of the ministry.

IV

It was obvious that the intrigues against Jesus were growing. News of the events in Galilee had reached Jerusalem, and a deputation of Scribes and Pharisees from Jerusalem was sent down to investigate. The accusation was made against Him that He cast out devils through Beelzebub, the prince of the devils. Whether the deputation thought that they had the best of the encounter with Jesus we do not know; at any rate, the opposition gradually grew and a series of events, one leading to another, finally brought on the crisis.

It was apparently after the second tour through Galilee that Jesus sent forth the twelve on a mission, two and two. They were to go with a staff in their hand and sandals on their feet, and one cloak, but

taking with them neither food nor purse, living on the hospitality of those to whom they preached. The burden of their message was, "The Kingdom of Heaven is at hand." They preached repentance; they exercised their spiritual power over unclean spirits and in healing diseases.

Now it must be apparent that this action on the part of Jesus, if it were known, would intensify the feeling of the authorities against Him. To the Pharisees it would look like an assumption of spiritual authority—like the Sanhedrin, Jesus was sending "Apostles." It must be remembered that this was a technical word used of the messengers of the Sanhedrin. It looked as if He were beginning to rival that body. To the Herodians and to Herod himself the action would be more significant. The new messengers announcing the setting up of a kingdom looked very much as if He were making preparations for revolt. Perhaps now, perhaps a little later, a message came to Jesus telling Him that Herod wished to put Him to death, to which the answer was given, the significance of which will appear later, "Go and say to that fox, Behold, I cast out devils and perform cures to-day and to-morrow, and the third day I am perfected. Howbeit I must go on my way to-day and to-morrow and the day following; for it cannot be that a prophet perish out of Jerusalem."[1] The threat was, indeed, probable. About this time came the news that John the Baptist, after being kept in prison about two years, had been put to death to gratify Herod's admiration of the dancing of Salome and the vindictiveness of her mother.

[1] Luke xiii. 32, 33.

The twelve returned, and at once Jesus took them across to the other side of the Lake. I have no doubt that the reason was, as the Gospel of S. Matthew clearly implies, fear of Herod. Jesus, so soon as He crossed the Lake, would be in the territory of Philip, and all immediate danger from Herod would be avoided. But although this danger was avoided, another became even more apparent—the danger from the multitude. The crowds which thronged Him and gave Him no leisure even to eat would not leave Him, and they went round the head of the Lake by land to the place where He had sought privacy, coming from all the towns and villages round. A great multitude assembled together, and there took place the feeding of the multitude. The only point to which I would draw your attention is the statement given us in S. John's Gospel that the people desired to make Jesus king. There is no doubt that it exactly corresponds with the situation and is in every way probable. Here was one who was certainly a great prophet whom many would suspect might be the Messiah. There were collected around Him in a place sufficiently remote to be free from interference a great body of Galileans, quite ready to be led to Jerusalem, as others had been before them. Let Jesus now disclose Himself, and the people would follow Him.

It is needless to say how completely alien this was to the purpose of Jesus, and how inevitable it was that He should try and get the people away as soon as possible and save His disciples from the contagion of the moment. It was obvious, too, that these events would increase the danger to which

He was exposed from the Government. News would certainly come that Jesus had assembled a large body of people in the wilderness, and even if the desire to make Him king was not known, the event would in any case arouse suspicion. Jesus sent away His disciples by boat to Bethsaida. He wished still to remain within the territory of Philip; but a strong north wind was blowing, the disciples could not make head against it and were blown towards the opposite shore. "And about the fourth watch of the night Jesus cometh unto them, walking on the sea."[1] Immediately, we are told, the wind ceased, and they put to land at Gennesareth, in the territory of Herod Antipas and dangerously near to Tiberias.

Here at once two dangers met them. On the one side the enthusiasm of the people. Probably Jesus wished to remain concealed, but He was at once recognized, and there were scenes of great enthusiasm. The second danger was a deputation of Scribes and Pharisees from Jerusalem. Clearly it would not be long before action was taken, and at once Jesus, for reasons which become more clear as we proceed, feels that a period of retirement is necessary. He departs on a long journey northwards. He passes out of the territory of Antipas, passes through the districts of Tyre and Sidon, and then, making a long detour among the mountains, comes back to the Sea of Galilee from the eastern side through the country of the Decapolis. All this journey would, as we have seen, be outside the territory of Antipas, and for the most part also

[1] Mark vi. 48.

outside Jewish territory. It does not seem quite clear whether the disciples were with Him during the greater part of this journey.

The date of these events may be settled with considerable probability. The feeding of the multitude takes place in the early spring. This is proved not only by the reference in S. John's Gospel to the Passover that was near at hand, but by the statement of S. Mark that there was green grass in the place. This, as we have seen, would only have been in the spring after there was rain. The journey to the north would probably take the summer months, and it would be in the early autumn of the year 32 that Jesus would come back once more to the Sea of Galilee.

V

It is at Bethsaida that we next meet Him and with His disciples. We notice that He still remains outside the territory of Antipas. The time is now approaching when the training of the disciples will be completed and Jesus will be ready for the final act.

They were in the neighbourhood of Cæsarea Philippi. On the way He asked His disciples, "Who do men say that I am?" And they answered, "John the Baptist, and others, Elijah; but others, One of the prophets. And He asked them, But who say ye that I am? Peter answereth and saith unto Him, Thou art the Christ."[1] We are told that after this Jesus began to tell them of His

[1] Mark viii. 27-29.

sufferings, and Peter, to whom this conception of the Messianic office was inconsistent with all his hopes and expectations, began to rebuke Him. And Jesus turned to him and said, "Get thee behind me, Satan; for thou mindest not the things of God but the things of men."[1] And there follows an address in which more clearly than ever before the true doctrine of sacrifice is taught. "If any man would come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow me. For whosoever would save his life shall lose it: and whosoever shall lose his life for my sake and the gospel's shall save it."[2]

Now, I would like to suggest to you that this story and all this sequence of events is entirely natural. The purpose of Jesus as it gradually reveals itself was to lead men to realize who He was, and in particular in this way to influence His disciples. As the result of His teaching the conviction grew on them, and at last came the confession, naturally through the mouth of Peter, who was both their leader and the most adventurous man among them. It was clearly natural also that when Jesus had won the confidence of His disciples He should begin to make them understand how different was the Messiah from what they had expected. He begins by teaching the doctrine of the suffering Messiah as He had understood it for long. It is equally natural that what He said was too hard a saying for His disciples, and that Peter again should be the spokesman; and the teaching that comes afterwards harmonizes with the new conception of the Messiah's office.

Six days afterwards Jesus went with the three

[1] Mark viii. 33. [2] *Ibid.*, viii. 34, 35.

principal disciples—Peter and James and John—high up on the slopes of Mount Hermon. We read the account of these great events in the quiet and unemotional language of the New Testament, which has become so conventional to us, and we forget the deep emotions that lay behind them. Jesus had suffered all the deepest strains of human nature. He had realized what seemed the inevitable failure of His ministry. He had roused the affections, the emotions, and the religious impulses of the people of Galilee, yet He was cut off from visiting them. He was prepared to proclaim Himself Messiah at Jerusalem, yet He knew that He would expose Himself to the most merciless attacks of those who supported the official religion of His people. He foresaw that it meant death, yet He was resolved to press on and accomplish His ministry. He believed, indeed, that in that way the purpose of His life would be fulfilled. He believed that as the Son of man He was the Judge of the world, and He felt Himself in union with the Father. But the Christian martyr who sees the Son of man sitting on the right hand of God experiences all the agony of expectation and doubt and death, and the Son of man Himself endured all the strain of human resolve. And for the disciples, too, how great had been the disillusionment and enlightenment. They recognized Jesus as the Messiah; they were prepared to throw in their lot with Him, to endure whatever they were called to bear, but they had looked forward to seeing Him reigning as the Anointed King over Israel, and now He spoke of the Cross. No wonder they were bewildered and needed retirement and prayer.

"And he was transfigured before them. And his garments became glistering, exceeding white; so as no fuller on earth can whiten them. And there appeared unto them Elijah with Moses: and they were talking with Jesus. And Peter answered and saith to Jesus, Rabbi, it is good for us to be here: and let us make three tabernacles; one for thee and one for Moses and one for Elijah. For he wist not what to say, for they became sore afraid. And there came a cloud overshadowing them: and there came a voice out of the cloud, This is my beloved Son; hear ye him. And suddenly looking round about, they saw no one any more, save Jesus only with themselves."[1]

I do not doubt that we have here a truthful account of a real spiritual experience, and I do not care to speculate as to what exactly were the objective facts.

VI

Jesus had set His face to go to Jerusalem and to finish His ministry. It was probably the autumn of the year A.D. 32. He passed secretly through Galilee and managed to escape observation. He visited the house at Capernaum—no doubt the house of Peter—which had always been His home during His ministry; and His disciples remembered some significant things He had said to them. Then He crossed the border into Samaria and immediately His attitude changed. "Again crowds came to Him, and again according to His custom He taught them." He continues, in fact, the ministry, and the scene is clearly indicated for us by S. Mark. He went

[1] Mark ix. 2-8.

through Judæa—that is the Roman province of Judæa which included Samaria—and then into Peræa. There was a long preaching tour, like those through Galilee, which S. Mark summarizes in exactly the same way as he does this one. Moreover, it is probable that S. Peter was not with Jesus during this journey, and that will account for the fact that there is no record of it in S. Mark's Gospel. He with other disciples was probably left behind in Galilee to bring up the Galilean contingent for the Feast and for the inauguration of the Messianic Kingdom. From S. Luke we get a corroboration of the nature of the journey. S. Luke has a large amount of additional information, part of which in all probability belongs to this period. It is clear that Jesus went through Samaria and, as far as was possible, preached there. This is shown not only by the direct statement which is given us, but by incidents referring to Samaritans. "He entered into a village of the Samaritans."[1] "And He went on His way through cities and villages teaching and journeying on unto Jerusalem."[2]

But the progress of Jesus to Jerusalem was more than this. As part of the preparation for the Kingdom Jesus had sent His disciples two and two to preach its coming. Now, as the event draws nigh, and the work of rousing the people of Israel fails to be accomplished—"The harvest is plenteous, but labourers are few"[3]—He "sent out seventy others two and two before his face into every city and place whither he himself was about to come,"[4] and the

[1] Luke ix. 52; *cf.* xvii. 11-19.
[2] *Ibid.*, x. 2.
[3] *Ibid.*, xiii. 22.
[4] *Ibid.*, x. 1.

message that they had to give was the same as that of John, the same as that of Jesus, the same as that of the twelve—"the Kingdom of God is come nigh unto you."[1] So the message of the coming of the Kingdom was spread through the Jewish nation.

It was perhaps at this time that Jesus began to lay the preparation for the end in Jerusalem itself. I do not feel certain that we can say this, but I would draw your attention to the fact that the narrative of S. Mark fits into that of S. John, and that S. Luke narrates incidents at this time which must have taken place in Jerusalem and not in Galilee. I believe that we shall eventually realize that as He prepared for the Kingdom elsewhere so He prepared for it in Jerusalem, that the opposition of the Pharisees here also began to be felt. The whole story of Lazarus as related by S. John provides a consistent and adequate history and prepares the way for the end. From there He passed on, as S. Mark has told us and as S. John suggests, into Peræa, and in Peræa he joins the pilgrimage from Galilee and the other disciples somewhere on the road to Jerusalem. This is how the event is described:

"Now they were in the way going up to Jerusalem, and Jesus was going before them; and they were amazed; and as they followed they were afraid. And once more he took unto him the twelve."[2]

Most of this passage is omitted by S. Matthew and S. Luke, for it did not seem to have much meaning; but if we realize that it represents Peter taking up

[1] Luke x. 9. [2] Mark x. 32.

the narrative again, that it tells us how Jesus attached Himself once more to a band of disciples, some of the twelve and others who had been summoned to the Feast and the inauguration of the Kingdom, then what would otherwise have seemed exaggerated language is explained. While the disciples were going to Jerusalem Jesus appeared suddenly walking before them and they were astonished.

So the preparation for the Kingdom was completed, and Jesus goes up to Jerusalem to inaugurate it.

VII

What, then, was the meaning and purpose of the life of Jesus? Was His preaching altogether aimless and purposeless? Had He no practical policy? Did He just go up to Jerusalem to die? What was the meaning of the continuous message, "The Kingdom of Heaven is at hand"? Let us attempt to understand this.

In the first place, Jesus recognized that He was the Messiah, the expected of Israel. He certainly recognized that from His Baptism. No doubt the thought had begun to form in His mind earlier, but it was then that it became a clear and definite conviction. It was implied in the words, "Thou art my Son, my Beloved." It was this conviction that gave that note of authority which was found in His teaching, and that explains His whole attitude to the law of Moses, to the Sabbath regulations, and to the powers of evil. "If I by the Spirit of God cast out devils, then is the Kingdom of God come

upon you,"[1] means that the Kingdom of God is coming and is coming through Him as the Messiah.

But, secondly, although He knew Himself to be the Messiah, He knew that the Messiah and the Kingdom of the Messiah were not to be at all what the Jews expected. The conception that He had formed came from the Old Testament and unified and transformed every element in the Old Testament expectation. To the figure of a Son of God it added the figure of the Suffering Servant. The working out of this conception will concern us later; at present, the point is to remember that it would not have fulfilled the purpose of Jesus if He had simply claimed to be the Messiah. It was more important to teach men that they might come to realize the conception of the Messiah that He desired to put before them. His method was, as we now say in modern language, psychologically sound. He would first win men to Himself; He would gradually teach them. He would not assert that He was the Messiah; He would make them feel that He was the Messiah. In that way He would prepare for His purpose.

But then, thirdly, what was His purpose? I have drawn your attention to the fact that the beginning of all the teaching of Jesus was "The Kingdom of Heaven is at hand," that this was the message of John the Baptist, the message of Jesus, the message of the twelve when they were sent out, and now the message of the seventy. Now, what did this mean? What was the conception underlying it? It could not mean merely a vague expectation that

[1] Matt. xii. 28.

something was going to happen, but we are never definitely told what was coming. Clearly, Jesus would have something more definite to give people. I have no doubt that the plan and purpose of His ministry was that after the message of repentance and righteousness had been preached, when the time had come He should go up to Jerusalem and there proclaim Himself as the Messiah and establish the Kingdom; that He should build up a reformed community of Israel, an Assembly or Ecclesia or Church of the Messiah, and the method by which it was to be established was that of a peaceful revolution. The ordinary false Christ collected together in the desert so many thousand deluded followers. If it were possible he marched them to Jerusalem, but somewhere on the way he would come in contact with Roman troops, and then there would be a massacre. The method of Jesus was not this. "They who take the sword shall perish with the sword." The Kingdom of God was to be established by the people accepting Jesus as the Messiah and learning to fulfil the will of God. All His actions show that it was the establishment of the Kingdom not by force but by faith that was the method of Jesus.

Then there was another thought inevitably present, that in establishing His Kingdom Jesus would meet with His death. He had learnt from the beginning of His ministry of a suffering Messiah; He had realized, as every prophet had realized, that the people would not hear Him, that there were many who would not believe the message, and that especially the rulers of the nation would not accept

His teaching. He had already been in danger of His life, and had stated that a prophet was not to perish outside Jerusalem. So there is clearly a double vision in Jesus' eyes. He goes up to Jerusalem to establish His Kingdom, but He knows that He will die in doing so, and He believes that His Kingdom will be established because He dies in founding it. Just as a grain of wheat must die to bring forth fruit, so He will die, and through His death His Kingdom will be established. And this is the inevitable rule of life for Him and for His followers. All this becomes more and more apparent as we proceed in our investigation.

Now I think that with this conception of the life of Jesus we must be prepared to revise what I think are the common estimates of the nature of His ministry. We think of it as a somewhat inconspicuous movement. A preacher moving about quiet and little noticed. I doubt if that is correct. It is, indeed, difficult to get a picture of it from outside. Josephus, who could easily have told us a great deal about it, had obviously adopted the policy of entirely ignoring something which he did not at all like and would have been glad to suppress. We can get nothing from him. We can, however, get something from Tacitus, whose account is as follows:

"The origin of the name Christian was Christ, who in the reign of Tiberius was condemned to death by Pontius Pilate. This detestable superstition was for a time suppressed, but afterwards broke out again, not only in Judæa where it first came into being, but even in Rome, the place where everything that is evil and shameful from all parts

of the world gravitates and when there grows in iniquity."[1]

Now we may assume that this account, which comes from pagan sources, represents the ministry of Jesus and the beginnings of Christianity as it appeared looked at from outside. We learn, therefore, that there was a time during the life of Jesus when the movement attracted considerable attention. For three years Jesus had taught. The beginning had been the preaching of the Baptist, which had created no small stir in the land; that had come to an end with the imprisonment of John. The ministry of Jesus in Galilee had begun, no doubt, in a small way; it had gradually assumed large proportions; its emissaries had preached up and down the country; the attention of the authorities began to be attracted by it; a great multitude came together in the desert and it looked as if a serious revolt had begun. Jesus avoids that danger, but for a time has to seek retirement. Then the time came for His ministry to be accomplished. He again begins to preach, this time in Southern Palestine, in the Roman province of Judæa which included Samaria, and in Peræa, perhaps also in Jerusalem. His emissaries are again sent in all directions through the country; a considerable movement is assured.

I think that we may pause here in our review of the ministry. The full story of the death of Jesus will occupy a future lecture, and that will give us an opportunity of re-examining some of these points. Meantime I would ask you to study carefully the

[1] Tacitus, *Annals*, xv. 44.

Gospel narrative in the light of this theory, and make up your minds for yourselves on two points The first is whether this description of the ministry is a satisfactory interpretation of the narrative; the second whether it does not make us feel that S. Mark presents us with an intelligent and trustworthy history.

There have, of course, been many other theories of the ministry. It has been held, for example, that Jesus did not claim to be the Messiah; that He was merely preparing the way for the coming of the Son of man from heaven. The importance of His moral teaching has been minimized, in view of his expectation of a speedy end of the world. The apocalyptic expectation has been made the fundamental purpose of the ministry. I cannot find that any of these views really harmonize with the facts contained in the history as we possess it. They imply that we ignore large portions of it. I ask you now to estimate for yourselves whether this is so.

And then, if you do agree that this is on the whole a correct picture of the ministry as it is presented to us, I will ask you to consider whether it does not make good the claim that I have made that in S. Mark we have a coherent, an intelligible, and therefore a true history. In the summary that I have given you I have in only one point departed from the order of the Gospel. I have omitted the first twenty-six verses of the eighth chapter. They contain, I believe, a doublet, a short narrative from a second source, which covers the same ground as the previous chapters. There is, I would maintain, nothing unreasonable in that hypothesis, for it is

not S. Mark himself so much as S. Peter behind S. Mark that we claim to be a good authority, and it is probable that S. Mark had other sources for his Gospel besides the narrative of S. Peter. With that exception the narrative as I have given it comes directly out of S. Mark. It comes also out of the most scientifically constructed text of that Gospel. It is interesting to notice how often some slight error, which has arisen as often as not from the influence of S. Matthew's Gospel, makes the narrative unintelligent.[1] If, then, we find ourselves able to construct out of S. Mark a coherent and intelligible narrative of our Lord's ministry, does it not assist in proving that the narrative is authentic, and that we may quite reasonably use that Gospel as a good historical authority for His life?[2]

[1] An interesting instance would be Mark vi. 45, where the words "unto the other side" should be omitted. They have caused endless confusion, and even suggested the hypothesis of two Bethsaidas. They have come in from S. Matthew, where they are intelligible, as he leaves out all reference to Bethsaida.

[2] Since the above was written, I have become more satisfied of the truth of the suggestion that I made on p. 67—that we must accept the evidence of S. John and allow that Jesus preached in Jerusalem before His final visit.

LECTURE III

THE TEACHING OF JESUS

THE TEACHING OF JESUS

One of the tendencies of the present age is to look at life from the psychological point of view. A man's emotions, passions, psychical history, and so on, are studied, and his character and actions are traced back to what are believed to be their causes. The result is that the elements of will and of purpose appear to be in danger of being eliminated. Conduct is referred, not to purpose, but to temperament; it is regarded as the inevitable result of antecedents. The tendency of such a study is to weaken individual responsibility and appears, at any rate at first sight, to eliminate morality. These same methods of study are applied to religion also. I have recently been reading a book, *Some Aspects of the Life of Jesus from the Psychological and Psycho-Analytic Point of View* by a certain Georges Berguer, in which principles such as these are used to explain the life of our Lord. It seems to be suggested that His theological teaching is to be interpreted not in relation to reality, but in relation to psychological conditions. The idea of self-sacrifice is a development, we are told, of what the psychologists call the Œdipus Complex. It arises out of the *Paternal Imago.* We hate the imperfect idea of

father; we love the enlarged *paternal imago*. "The *paternal imago* divides also, but in a different way, on a higher plane: on one side are the paternal human representations, all humanity considered as a family, the human beings, who are his brethren, his mother, his sisters; then, on the other side, is a new *paternal imago*, unknown before and of a purity and a force of attraction such as are to be found nowhere else, which Jesus calls 'the Father,' properly speaking, in opposition to all the other paternities. It is upon this spiritual Father, who dominates life with all his divine loftiness and who animates life with all his human intimacy, that the power of Christ's love is concentrated. It is this heavenly Father, attained and recognized in a new and yet old experience, a true experience, but one which before Jesus had been merely potential in humanity, had been merely anticipated, so to speak—it is this Father who is the real Father, it is he who has a right to all the love."

Now, I never know how far language like this is to be taken seriously, whether it really means that all religious emotion is to be traced to subjective experiences and does not correspond to any objective reality. But certainly that seems to be the tendency of a good deal of such speculation. I am not certain what the value of this modern psychology is. To me personally it appears to be fantastic and unreal. But whatever may be its value at the present age, it is not adequate as an explanation of the teaching of Jesus. It does not represent what He taught and thought. His representation of life is not the psychological but the ethical. Conduct is not the

result of emotion and feelings, but of will and of purpose. There is a good will and a bad will. There is an objective ethical standard to which men ought to conform, and in that lies the reality of life. Whether it really is reality is part of the problem before us. The ultimate aim of these lectures is to discover whether we have cause for thinking that this representation of life is the absolute and the real. At this stage of our enquiry it is sufficient for us to recognize the character of the teaching of Jesus. It is based on the fundamental principle of God and of Righteousness. It claims to be a revelation, not of the subjective experience of human beings, although it is consistent with all such experience, but of the ultimate reality of life and the universe.

I

We have to remember, to start with, that the teaching of Jesus was conditioned by the religious history of the Jewish people. The fundamental fact of that religious history was its strong hold on the idea of an objective moral law. That law may have been imperfect in some directions. It mingled, at any rate, in ordinary Jewish life the moral and the ceremonial. But the Jew was definitely distinguished from the populations among which he lived by the fact that he had a strong conception of a moral rule of life, and, whatever imperfections there may have been, this has been one of the fundamental causes of his survival. In studying the teaching of Jesus,

then, we have to remember that it is derived from the inherited teaching of Judaism as contained in the Old Testament.

We illustrate nowadays the Gospels from the contemporary Jewish writings, and these illustrations are up to a certain point of great value. They give us the atmosphere of the time; they give us the phraseology of the day, and we have to remember that Jesus expressed Himself always in the language of His own time. But whatever value this information may have, it does not give us the real source. The real source of the teaching of Jesus was the teaching of the Old Testament. Jesus had read it, and had read it deeply, and He has shown an extraordinary instinct, if we may put it so, in drawing out from it its most spiritual lessons and then in transforming it, a transformation which really consists in understanding its fundamental character. To take one example, I suppose almost everyone would consider that one of the most characteristic points in the teaching of Jesus was His summing-up of the whole of morality in the idea of love. Yet we have to remember that that teaching is based directly on a passage in the Old Testament. In the Old Testament somehow it seems lost amidst a mass of other teaching: in the Gospel it becomes the most prominent characteristic. That will illustrate how the teaching of Jesus starts from the Old Testament, draws out what is most spiritual in it and transforms it into what is fundamental in life.

I propose, then, in this lecture to speak of the teaching of Jesus as a transformation of the teaching

of the Old Testament, and will group what I have to say under the following heads:

The interpretation of the idea of God.
The interpretation of the ethical idea.
The interpretation of the idea of the Kingdom.
The interpretation of the idea of Worship.
The interpretation of the idea of the Messiah.
The interpretation of the idea of a Future Life.

II

We start with the interpretation of the idea of God. Let us notice, to begin with, the way in which this teaching comes to us. It is all incidental, fragmentary. Jesus is never represented as teaching us explicitly what God is like. Probably He never did so. He assumes the belief, but gives the necessary teaching for every occasion. That brings out what He believes and thinks about God, and in that way we get what amounts really to a great transformation of ideals. We find a conception of God that has persisted from that time onwards. It was taken up and worked out by the Apostolic Church and has prevailed, however imperfectly, in Christian history. When we notice that this new conception comes to us in a number of incidental, fragmentary sayings, it will help us to feel that these sayings must have a common source of inspiration.

The people of Israel were unique in the ancient world in their conception of God. We may say even more. What they accomplished is unique in the history of mankind, for the religion of Israel revealed

God to man. All nations who have learnt to believe in God as a religious ideal have learnt it from Israel. Through Israel was revealed to man a belief in one God, the Creator, Sustainer and Ruler of the world, and above all a righteous God. How singular was such a belief may be learnt by a comparison with the mythologies of the surrounding nations, particularly the nature religions. Israel had gradually learnt to conceive of Him as God of the whole earth. As a righteous God, His great characteristic was that of a just ruler and judge. He rewarded the righteous and punished the unjust. His righteousness was shown by His wrath against sin. He was King and Judge, and therefore the fundamental note in the relation of man to God was that of fear. Yet, and this we must notice particularly, a tenderer conception is not absent. God is a Father. "Like as a father pitieth his children, so the Lord pitieth them that fear him."[1] But even here it is the sterner element which is present in the conception of the fatherhood of God. "For whom the Lord loveth he reproveth; even as a father the son in whom he delighteth."[2]

When we turn to the New Testament we do not, as far as I remember, find any actual conceptions which we can say are new, and yet we recognize that the teaching is changed. The God of the Old Testament is Personal, Righteous, the Father; He is spoken of as loving. But what was there faintly foreshadowed and only imperfectly realized is in the New Testament presented in clear, strong delineations. Perhaps the contrast may be best

[1] Ps. ciii. 13. [2] Prov. iii. 12.

expressed by the following illustration. There are many titles and names by which God was known in the Old Testament expressing His power, His majesty and His glory. None of these are used by Jesus. If you turn to the later Jewish literature, like the Book of Enoch, you notice the number of titles there employed. Some twenty-eight are enumerated, such as Head of Days, Holy and Great One, King of Kings, Lord of Glory, and so on. They all express the majesty, the power and the glory of God. The one that does not occur is Father, just that one which Jesus so habitually and constantly makes use of. I do not know anything which will illustrate for us the great transformation of thought better than this.

We begin, then, with the Fatherhood of God. In Hosea, father, like husband, is anthropomorphic. The Holy Father of Isaiah, who teaches us above all the transcendence of God, corrects this. But how close and intimate and loving is the Fatherhood of God as conceived by Jesus! The fundamental note of the Lord's Prayer is the address to the Father: "Our Father which art in heaven." The life of Jesus on earth is intimately bound up with His relation to the Father: "I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that thou didst hide these things from the wise and understanding, and didst reveal them unto babes."[1] "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do."[2] But if God is the Father of Jesus, and Jesus in an especial sense addresses Him as My Father, equally is He the Father of mankind, and of each individual man, on

[1] Matt. xi. 25. [2] Luke xxiii. 34.

whom He expends His provident care. "Your Father knoweth what things ye have need of before ye ask him."[1] "If God doth so clothe the grass of the field, which to-day is, and to-morrow is cast into the oven, shall he not much more clothe you, O ye of little faith?"[2] "How much more shall your Father which is in heaven give good things to them that ask him?"[3]

And it is particularly in relation to the Fatherhood of God that other aspects of the Godhead are revealed in the Gospels. The God of the Old Testament and of later Jewish writings was personal; but whether we look at the relation of Jesus Himself to God, or that of the individual Christian, the personal character of God is depicted far more intimately. "Thy Father which seeth in secret shall recompense thee."[4] "Are not two sparrows sold for a farthing? And not one of them shall fall to the ground without your Father: but the very hairs of your head are all numbered."[5]

God in the Old Testament is just and righteous. The righteousness of God in the New Testament is fundamental, but the God of the New Testament is not only just, He is good. That distinction which Marcion emphasized in the manner which the imperfect thought of the day appeared to justify, was a true interpretation of the difference of conceptions. "Friend, I do thee no wrong: didst not thou agree with me for a penny? Take up that which is thine, and go thy way: it is my will to give unto this last, even as unto thee. Is it not lawful for me to do

[1] Matt. vi. 8. [2] *Ibid.*, vi. 30. [3] *Ibid.*, vii. 11.
[4] *Ibid.*, vi. 4. [5] *Ibid.*, x. 29, 30.

that I will with mine own? Is thy eye evil, because I am good?"[1]

And as He is good, so He may be described as Love. It is S. John who first summed up the Christian teaching concerning God in the great phrase "God is love," and it may very probably be his own interpretation of the teaching of Christ. But, like the other interpretations of S. John, it is true. The love of God is shown by the love which is demanded of men: "Love your enemies, and pray for them that persecute you; that ye may be sons of your Father which is in heaven: for he maketh his sun to rise on the evil and the good, and sendeth rain on the just and the unjust."[2] And the mercy and forgiveness of God can be learnt by their reflection among men: "For if ye forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you."[3] "So shall also your heavenly Father do unto you, if ye forgive not every one his brother from your hearts."[4] "There shall be joy in heaven over one sinner that repenteth, more than over ninety and nine righteous persons which need no repentance."[5]

As in the Old Testament, God is King, He is all-powerful, and His rule is universal. "With men this is impossible: but with God all things are possible."[6] Heaven is His throne and earth is His footstool. But the idea of King and of Kingdom implies an intimate personal relationship. "Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom pre-

[1] Matt. xx. 13-16.
[2] *Ibid.*, v. 44.
[3] *Ibid.*, vi. 14.
[4] *Ibid.*, xviii. 35.
[5] Luke xv 7.
[6] Matt. xix. 26.

pared for you from the foundation of the world."[1] God as King "will avenge his elect which cry to him day and night, and he is long-suffering over them."[2]

But though He is Father, and good and loving, or perhaps rather because he is all these, his demands on mankind are high, and He is a stern and just Judge. "Every one therefore who shall confess me before men, him will I also confess before my Father which is in heaven. But whosoever will deny me before men, him will I also deny before my Father which is in heaven."[3] "Cast ye out the unprofitable servant into the outer darkness: there shall be the weeping and gnashing of teeth."[4]

I do not think that I need illustrate the conception of God in our Lord's teaching any further. What I would suggest to you is this, that you should take any parable or characteristic saying of our Lord and analyse the conception of God which is implied in it. If, as I think you will find, there is everywhere, sometimes only implied, sometimes definitely stated, what we may describe as the Christian idea of God, and if, as a matter of fact, we do not find this conception in earlier literature, does it not suggest, behind the teaching of the New Testament, a unity which would not be possible if the teaching that has been handed down to us merely represented a tendency of the times?

[1] Matt. xxv. 34.
[2] Luke xviii. 7.
[3] Matt. x. 32, 33.
[4] *Ibid.*, xxv. 30.

III

I pass now to our second point, the transformation of the ethical ideal, or, as I think it would be better to describe it, the transformation of teaching concerning human life. Here we are in a different position with regard to the teaching of Jesus. We have it clearly put before us in what we are accustomed to describe as the Sermon on the Mount.

Let us pause for a moment to discuss a critical question. I do not myself believe that this ordered exposition of the teaching of Jesus comes in the form that we have it from our Lord Himself. I think that its present form is due mainly to the author of the first Gospel. A considerable part of it was derived from *The Discourses*, but I doubt whether the sayings which in S. Matthew are said to have been delivered on a mountain and in S. Luke on the plain, originally contained more than the Beatitudes. The remainder of S. Luke's "Sermon" consists really of a number of isolated sayings like the other matter contained in *The Discourses*. In the original document there was no locality given for the delivery of the words, and the variation between "mountain" and "plain" arises from the different point in S. Mark's narrative at which the sermon put together from *The Discourses* has been placed. S. Luke, at a certain point in S. Mark's narrative, inserted the Beatitudes and a considerable section of *The Discourses*. S. Matthew's proceeding was more elaborate. He transferred to the very beginning of the ministry a section of S. Mark which described how Jesus preached to a great multitude,

and there inserted, as he did in other cases, an elaborated account of our Lord's teaching, drawn partly from *The Discourses*, partly from other sources, and carefully arranged to bring out its full meaning. But if the arrangement is probably due to S. Matthew, that does not mean that the matter is due to him. We have as ample evidence as we need require that the teaching and, for the most part, also the words come from our Lord. We can find parallels to the teaching, and in some cases to the words, in S. Mark. We know from the evidence of S. Luke that a considerable portion came from *The Discourses*, and there is no reason for thinking that the greater part of the remainder is not authentic teaching. In style and in spirit it harmonizes entirely with the teaching of Jesus. There were other writings containing a record of the words of Jesus besides those which we can trace, and the author of the first Gospel clearly had access to them.

In particular I would strongly defend the authenticity of the teaching of Jesus concerning the Jewish Law. It has been maintained that the discourse on the Law in the fifth chapter of S. Matthew has been put together from the controversies in the Apostolic Church between the Judaizing and the Gentile parties, and in particular, that Jesus could not have used the words, "Think not that I came to destroy the law, or the prophets: I came not to destroy, but to fulfil. For verily I say unto you, Till heaven and earth pass away, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be accomplished."[1] It has been maintained that this passage is later

[1] Matt. v. 17, 18.

than our Lord's time, that it was inserted to represent the point of view of the Judaizing party. So far from agreeing with that, I should hold that there is no passage which expresses more profoundly the attitude of our Lord towards the Old Testament, and shows greater insight into His purpose, and I should hold that we might say almost quite certainly that it came from Himself. His whole attitude towards the Old Testament, and not merely towards the Law, was that He was fulfilling it. It is not only His attitude, but it represents exactly the characteristics of His teaching. His teaching, as we have seen, is based on the Old Testament. He always draws out its most spiritual meaning. He does not abolish the Sabbath; He brings out its true purpose. He does not do away with the Commandments; He shows their true meaning, and then He seeks out the fundamental principle which underlies all the Commandments and finds it in the Law of Love, and that Law, too, He brings from the Old Testament.

I believe, then, that there are good grounds for thinking that the teaching of the Sermon on the Mount comes from our Lord, and I would add that this systematic exposition which we owe to S. Matthew seems to be an admirable and, so far as we can judge from other sources, an accurate exposition of that teaching.

Let us now attempt to sum up its teaching shortly. The Sermon on the Mount is a transformation of the theory of human life in the light of certain conceptions as to the nature of God and the destiny of man. The note is struck by the Beatitudes, and the

altered conception is revealed to us by the contrast with the Beatitudes of the Book of Deuteronomy. What the Old Testament puts before us is an honourable, upright, worldly prosperity. The Christian Beatitudes are spiritual and religious, but still they have their root in the Old Testament, especially in the Book of Psalms. The poor are the pious, humble worshippers of the second Temple, whose religious aspirations and trust in God are there recorded. It is not the rich, or the worldly, or the powerful that are blessed, but the poor in spirit, the weak, the peaceable, the pure in heart, and the blessings promised are not prosperity on earth, but life with God.

Then this ideal is worked out for us in relation to ethics. The old Law was a code of rules mainly negative and concerned actions only. The new Law touches our thoughts as well as our actions and is positive. It is summed up in the fundamental rule, "Thou shalt love." The old Law limited our moral obligations to our friends: the new Law says that we must love our enemies. The complete outlook is exhibited in the closing words, "Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect."

The same principles are applied in other directions—uncharitable judgment, care for holy things, the way of life, the fruits of life. The Christian life is a life built up on the vision of God and not on the goods of this world. This is most apparent as regards the teaching on wealth. To the Jew of the Old Testament worldly prosperity was a good, something to be sought after. A rich man was, as

such, better than a poor man. He must indeed keep the Law and act righteously and justly, but wealth might be quite reasonably looked on as his aim in life. To Jesus it was quite different. It was not a good at all. It was a snare and a danger. "How hardly shall they that have riches enter into the kingdom of heaven." "Sell all that thou hast and give to the poor and come follow me." "Ye cannot serve God and Mammon." It was not that there was anything wrong in the things of the world in themselves. There is no touch of Manichæism in the Gospels. It is that our thoughts and minds should be turned to God and heavenly things. We must have one aim, God and righteousness, and then all other things will come in their places. Our standard is to be not wealth but Godliness.

It is not merely that we have a higher ideal, we have a different ideal. We have one which cannot be analysed or brought within the categories of ordinary moral conduct. We are to hunger and thirst after righteousness. We are to be so absolutely pure that we have no evil thoughts. We are to be so regardless of the things of this world that we are not to be troubled about anything in the world. In order to describe the new life our Lord sometimes seems to expound His teaching in paradoxes. Ultimately the difference between the old and the new was this: the old represented the worldly life, lived in the sight of God; the new represented a life so absolutely absorbed in the thought of God that this world may be neglected. In other sayings of Jesus this meaning is brought out fully. "He that findeth his life shall lose

it: and he that loseth his life for my sake shall find it."

IV

We now turn to another conception, that of the Kingdom, and here, as in the relation to the conception of God, we have to construct for ourselves an explanation of what our Lord's meaning was. Jesus never defines the Kingdom, and the Christian Church has never succeeded in doing so, for each different age of Christianity has given to the expression that meaning which harmonizes with the aspirations of the time. The later Apostolic Church dropped the word, for it seemed to be one that had dangerous associations. It was incomprehensible to the Gentiles and might lead to the suspicion of revolutionary aims.

The Kingdom, like all the conceptions of Jesus, was drawn direct from the Old Testament, and was apparently a current term of Judaism. As such, it might be interpreted in a variety of ways. It meant the restoration of the Kingdom of David. The people of Israel, the Holy Nation, were no longer to be trampled upon by the foreigner. Once more they would be free and independent, the people of God. Jerusalem, and not Rome, would be the centre of the world empire. That was clearly the thought in the minds of the crowd when they acclaimed Jesus at his entry into Jerusalem. "Blessed be the kingdom of our father David, that cometh in the name of the Lord." Then normally, and in the case of all higher minds, this became essentially a righteous

Kingdom, but it was definitely associated with worldly sovereignty.

Besides this there was undoubtedly another conception, which may be described as apocalyptic. On this I need not dwell. It has been spoken about much lately and there is a great deal of modern literature on the subject. Those who were indifferent to a temporal sovereignty looked forward to a new æon. The details of what they hoped for might vary, for what is built up wholly on the imagination can have no fixed outline; but they expected the destruction of the present order of things, the creation of a new heaven and a new earth, the destruction of the wicked in unending torment, the reward of the righteous by the life with God. The Messiah, the Son of God, would come from heaven and would establish His Kingdom, and the poor and the persecuted would share in the glories of the golden age.

Then there was a third interpretation of the Kingdom, which we find in later Rabbinical writings. It is admirably illustrated in Dalman's *The Words of Jesus.* How far it prevailed so early as this, we have no means of judging. The Kingdom of Heaven was looked upon as a recognition of the sovereignty of God. It meant, therefore, the accepting of the yoke of the Law. It became the natural ideal of the Jewish Church after Jerusalem was destroyed. It directly expressed the pious and religious aspirations of a section of the people, who, however unconsciously, were out of touch with the political and ecclesiastical aims of their times.

Our Lord began His ministry by announcing that the Kingdom of Heaven was at hand. Those who heard Him, the majority at any rate, would think that He meant that the great Jewish Kingdom would shortly be established for which men were always hoping and striving. Some, no doubt, thought of the coming of the Son of Man in clouds from heaven. But what did Jesus Himself mean? Now I am going to ask you to turn to the parables of the Kingdom. We may, I think, quite reasonably take them as some of the most undoubtedly authentic words of our Lord. The Kingdom of Heaven is like a sower sowing seed. If you think of what the Kingdom meant to most people at that time, is it wonderful that this parable mystified the hearers? For what does it mean? It means that the Kingdom stands for the preaching of the Word of God and the establishment of that Word in the hearts of men. The Kingdom of Heaven is like a seed growing secretly. Does not that mean the gradual spreading throughout the world of an idea, a system of thought? The Kingdom of Heaven is like a grain of mustard seed, which grows into a great tree. That means the growth of something visible which men can see and say, "Here is the Kingdom." The Kingdom of Heaven is like leaven—again the permeation of ideas in the world. Sometimes, then, it is something which men can see, but at other times it is something which works unseen. Does not this mean, then, that Jesus meant to establish His Kingdom by new spiritual ideas which would be spread throughout the world, and that in that way a great body of those who would accept His teaching would be

built up? Are not these conceptions exactly fulfilled in what we mean by Christianity?

Or let us take the Lord's Prayer. "Thy Kingdom come, Thy will be done." The fundamental idea of the Kingdom is the fulfilment of God's will. But that is to be attained not by the establishment of an earthly kingdom, but by the willing acceptance of God's will. So the Kingdom means righteousness. "Seek ye first the kingdom of God and his righteousness."

Everything, therefore, connected with the current conceptions of earthly rule is entirely alien to our Lord's teaching. "Put up thy sword into the sheath: for all they that take the sword shall perish with the sword."

But all the same the conception of a society is not absent. It was part of the Old Testament thought and it is present in the New. There is a definite body of men, sons of the Kingdom, and under certain conditions they are able to enter into the Kingdom or are expelled from it. Sometimes the Kingdom is spoken of as already working, but at other times it is something in the future. All these different thoughts seem to be present in Jesus' teaching. They may all be reduced to the fundamental idea of the acceptance of the will of God. And are not these fulfilled in what we mean by Christianity, the Christian Church, and its final consummation as the Church triumphant? The Kingdom means the acceptance of God's will, the life of righteousness, the Gospel, the union of those who accept this Gospel as the new society, the new Israel,

[1] Matt. vi. 33.

the Church of the Messiah. It means life, and eternal life. And so we find the idea of the Kingdom interpreted in these different ways. To S. Paul "the kingdom of God is righteousness, peace and joy in the Holy Ghost." The social side of the Kingdom is summed up in the Christian Church. In S. John's Gospel the place of the Kingdom is taken by life or eternal life.

When we were studying the life of our Lord and trying to discover what His conception and His meaning was, I pointed out to you that everything leads up to a proclamation of Jesus as the Messiah and the announcement of the Kingdom at Jerusalem. The Kingdom was to be established, not by the sword, but by a peaceful revolution, by the teaching of the Gospel, and Jesus knew that it could only be established through His death. If we combine this action of His with the conception of the Kingdom (as we can construct it from the words of the Gospels), I would suggest to you that it means that our Lord's conception of the Kingdom corresponded with the ideals which underlie Christianity as we know it.

Now here again we have a complete transformation of the idea of the Kingdom. The Old Testament thought is taken up. It did imply the rule of God; it did imply the building up of a new society; but all these conceptions are interpreted in a new way. Our Lord strips off everything worldly, everything unreal, and shows us the spiritual reality of the Old Testament ideals.

V

There is the same transformation in the ideal of worship. The Jewish people had built up in the Temple services one of the most impressive ideals of ancient worship. Sacrifice, a fundamental conception of natural religion, is here put before us in its highest and most systematic form. It had come to be associated more and more with the moral elevation of the Jewish people. How different had the worship become to the old sacrifices on the hill-tops! When separated from the Temple, the Jew had built up a system of personal religious life on the threefold foundation of almsgiving, prayer, and fasting. It was the most fully organized, the most personal, the most religious worship of pre-Christian times. Our Lord taught in Galilee, so that there is but little recorded in relation to the services of the Temple, but one of the causes of His condemnation was that He was reported to have spoken of the destruction of the Temple and the building up of a new one. But regarding worship in relation to the current Jewish life He showed by his conduct and teaching how spiritual it should be. Ostentation in almsgiving is condemned. It is something which we do in secret. Prayer is to be neither public nor lengthy. It is to be the secret conference of the devout soul with the Father. Fasting is something which implies personal and private devotion. S. John's Gospel, whether recording an actual incident in our Lord's life or putting His teaching in dramatic form, tells us how Jesus said to the Samaritan woman, "Ye shall neither in this mountain, nor yet at Jerusalem,

worship the Father. . . . But the hour cometh, and now is, when the true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth: for such doth the Father seek to be his worshippers. God is a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth."[1] Again I would point out to you how the Old Testament conceptions are transformed and spiritualized.

VI

The ultimate destiny of the Jewish people was summed up in the expectation of the Messiah, the Anointed. Like all Jewish ideas, it seems gradually to emerge, and it took different forms at different periods of the history of Israel. Fundamentally it goes back to the ideals which surrounded the memories of the reign of David, and all the hopes of Israel were associated with these expectations. This hope as presented by the prophets had taken various forms. There was the looking forward to the coming once more of a true Prophet to Israel. The prophet Ezekiel had pictured an idealized Temple, an idealized Law, ideal Sacrifice, and these different thoughts had been developed in more recent times. Normally the expectation was that of the Messiah King, but the Maccabæan period had created the idea of the Messiah Priest, and the Theocracy looked forward to the establishment of the Law of God throughout the earth.

There has been much discussion as to the relation of Jesus to this ideal. Some have maintained that

[1] John iv. 23-25.

He never claimed to be the Messiah at all. It is difficult to support that view unless we eliminate a large part of His teaching, for the main thing for us to remember is not only what He did or what He said, but also what was implied by His actions and words. Certainly it was quite clear from His trial that He was condemned on the grounds of His claim to be the Messiah and that He did not deny the accusation. It is quite true that He did not openly claim during his ministry to be the Messiah. He preaches the Kingdom first; He gradually transforms the idea of the Kingdom; He wins people to Himself by His personality, His teaching, His Life; He teaches with authority; and so He gradually persuades those who would follow Him that He is the Messiah, and His disciples, under the leadership of Peter, accept Him. It has always seemed to me a paradox to maintain that Jesus did not claim to be the Messiah. But when He claimed to be the Messiah, it was one very different from him whom the Jews expected. We have seen how when the people were anxious to make Him king He refused it. That puts before us the difference between the two conceptions. When Peter acclaims Him as the Messiah, Jesus immediately begins to correct His misconception of the function of the Messiah. We have seen that Jesus claimed always to fulfil the whole of the Old Testament. His Messianic conception was of one in whom the Old Testament was to be consummated. But contemporary thought had always been imperfect. Only the obvious ideas had been accepted. The kingly idea, the Ruler of a glorified Israel, contained

perhaps something of the idea of the Prince of Peace. But there were other lines of thought in the Old Testament, and it is striking how Jesus embraces these as well. He identifies Himself, and therefore the Messiah, with the Servant of Jehovah of the Book of Isaiah, and so inevitably adds to the other spiritual ideas connected with it the idea of undeserved, vicarious suffering.

So we have summed up, in Jesus' conception of what He was to be, all the different ideals of the Old Testament; and this apparently without conscious purpose on His part. When, at His baptism, He is greeted as the Son, the Beloved One, it associates Him with all that is implied by the Son of God of the Psalms and the chosen servant of Isaiah. And all the different ideas are united in Him naturally and simply. The Jews looked forward to the coming of a Messiah who would be someone conspicuous. When he came, he would make quite clear his credentials by the signs he would give. Wonderful things would happen. But that was not Jesus' way. He hardly ever gave a sign. Perhaps riding into Jerusalem on an ass might be regarded as such, but He selected that because it was associated particularly with the most spiritual ideals of the Messiah. And so, instead of kingly rule and lordship, He says that the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many. He selects the expression "the Son of man" and associates it in particular with His humiliation.

Now here again we see how, just in the same way

as with each of the other conceptions which He inherited from Judaism, our Lord starts from the Old Testament teaching. He is, however, much more comprehensive than anyone who had been before. He fulfils all righteousness. Lines of thought that had been neglected are contained in His teaching and everything is unified in His Person and spiritualized.

VII

We come now to the transformation of the idea of a future life. It is generally considered that any belief in a life after death existed only in a crude form during the early years of Israel. A future life of rewards and punishments they did not know of. Their belief was confined to the idea of Sheol, or Hades, the place of the departed, where they lived a life which was no life. "The dead praise not thee, O Lord: neither all they that go down into silence." It is after the Exile that we begin to find hints of a more elevated form of belief, and it appears to come, not as the result of reason and speculation, but, as always in the case of the religion of Israel, as a result of religious experience. So intense became the belief in God, so real the consciousness of life in His presence, that it began to be felt that life which depended upon Him must be as eternal as He was. This spiritual belief became a religious truth in the days of the Maccabees. When the son of Sirach was writing in the days of prosperity under the rule of the Ptolemies, it was quite possible to believe that the righteous

were rewarded in this world. In such a community as Jerusalem was when he wrote, on the whole it might be said that it paid to be good. But under the persecution of Antiochus, when the reward of fidelity to the Law of the God of Israel was almost certain death, when the most holy laid down their lives as martyrs, no such belief was possible, and so in the Book of Daniel we find for the first time a clear indication of a belief in the future. "And many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt. And they that be wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament; and they that turn many to righteousness as the stars for ever and ever."[1] From that time onwards a belief in the future life of rewards and punishments was part of the religion of Israel, or rather was believed in by a part (probably the great majority) of Israel, and this belief formed in one way or another a basis of the Apocryphal literature. We find a visualized conception of this belief worked out with great precision in the Book of Enoch. Undoubtedly there was a strong material element in the form that it took in Jewish writings.

If we turn to our Lord's teaching, we find that the Apocryphal imagery and language does not entirely cease. He expresses Himself in this as always in the language of contemporary thought, but somehow or other the whole belief is transformed. We can see how the idea of the Kingdom is transformed into that of eternal life. "And when he was gone forth into the way, there came one

[1] Dan. xii. 3.

running, and kneeled to him, and asked him, Good Master, what shall I do that I may inherit eternal life?" We note the answer that Jesus gives. "One thing thou lackest: go thy way, sell whatsoever thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven: and come, take up the cross, and follow me." And directly afterwards Jesus, turning to His disciples, says, "How hardly shall they that have riches enter into the kingdom of God!" And He adds, "There is no man that hath left house, or brethren, or sisters, or father, or mother, or wife, or children, or lands, for my sake, and the gospel's, but he shall receive an hundredfold now in this time, houses, and brethren, and sisters, and mothers, and children, and lands, with persecutions; and in the world to come eternal life."[1]

It is clear, then, that eternal life is synonymous with the Kingdom in one of its aspects, and that shows us that S. John is correct when, interpreting the language of Jesus into the thought of a later time, he represents Him as speaking continually of life or eternal life. And the nature of this life is in the same way corrected. We are told how the Sadducees, who did not believe in the resurrection, tried to puzzle Him with a difficult question. "In the resurrection whose wife shall she be of the seven? for they all had her." No doubt the ordinary Apocryphal teaching had created that sort of idea of a future life which was taken over by Mohammedanism. Jesus answers, "In the resurrection they neither marry, nor are given in marriage, but are as the angels of God in heaven."[2]

[1] Mark x. 17-31. [2] *Ibid.*, xii. 25.

The future life is associated with the spiritual character of our Lord's teaching. And so in the same way the heavenly ideal is presented to us. "Take heed that ye despise not one of these little ones; for I say unto you, That in heaven their angels do always behold the face of my Father which is in heaven."[1] And still more, "Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God."[2] Here again Jesus starts from the ideas of current religion. He does not discard the current phraseology, but simply by impressing upon it the spiritual contents of His message, He transforms the hope and expectation of the future life.

I have now gone through the teaching of Jesus under a number of different headings, and I would sum up certain conclusions that may be deduced from what we have said. It is important to notice that our record of the teaching is very fragmentary. Except as regards the Sermon on the Mount, there is practically no systematic or continuous teaching at all. We have a number of disconnected parables, sayings, incidents, which have been recorded. Many of the points which seem to be of greatest importance are touched upon only very occasionally. Yet, fragmentary as it is, it is extraordinarily complete. We can really put together a quite complete conception of religion, and of life. The Christian Church built up its conception of the meaning of morality and of human life on the basis of it. Jesus never gives us a theory of the Messiah. He was the Messiah, and a transformed one. As Christianity

[1] Matt. xviii. 10. [2] *Ibid.*, v. 8.

advances, its teaching becomes more explicit. The teaching of the Apostles is more explicit than the teaching of our Lord. The teaching of the Church becomes better arranged than that of the Apostles. But this incidental teaching of Jesus illuminates life in a way that nothing else can. There is a consistency about the whole. The teaching, as we have said, is fragmentary. It comes from several sources. There is a certain discrepancy in the accounts of the same events. But none of these things is important, for all the teaching is transfused with the same spirit and creates the same ideal of life. It represents a source from which Christianity can have come.

And now I would ask you, is it possible to believe that this teaching was the creation of the Christian Church? It is quite different from what the Christian Church would create. The Christian Church created a theology like that of S. Paul or the writer of the Epistle to the Hebrews. Here you have the life, the thoughts, the personality, out of which Christianity grew.

LECTURE IV

THE PERSONALITY OF JESUS

THE PERSONALITY OF JESUS

We should be very glad to think that we had an authentic portrait of Jesus. There are some grounds for believing that the traditional portraits of S. Peter and S. Paul are authentic, and the description of S. Paul contained in the Acts of Thecla may well be based on sound tradition. But as regards Christ it is different. If we turn to Christian art, we find that tradition varies. The earliest and most common type seems to be a youthful and beardless figure of purely ideal character, "such as is found in the usual classical subjects." There are said to be 104 examples of this type in the Catacombs, 97 in the sarcophagi, 14 in the mosaics, 45 on gold glasses, 50 in other arts, and 3 in manuscripts. This representation continued occasionally into the twelfth and thirteenth centuries. There is a second type, which represents Christ as bearded in the fullness of manly strength, and then there is the third type, the Byzantine, which embodies the growing asceticism of the time. Christ in this type appears older and more severe, with longer hair and beard, deep-set eyes and hard features.

If we turn to literature, we find that there was an interesting dispute as to the appearance of Christ. While the earlier portraits of Christ, however much

they varied, were idealized representations of our Lord as a beautiful youth, there was a tradition in the Church, based partly on the Old Testament, representing Him as without beauty. Clement of Alexandria held that He was "unlovely in the flesh," Tertullian that "He was not even in His aspect comely." There were those who, quoting Scripture, said that He "was fairer than the children of men." There were others who declared that He "had no form or comeliness, no beauty that we should desire Him." Clearly these descriptions were based on theological conceptions rather than tradition. Gradually, however, there developed a type which seems to have been based upon supposed descriptions of Christ's appearance. The most famous is contained in a document, which is said to be a forgery, of about the twelfth century. "There has appeared in our times," writes the supposed Lentulus, "a man of tall stature, beautiful, with a venerable countenance, which they who look on it can both love and fear. His hair is waving and crisp, somewhat wine-coloured, and glittering as it flows down over his shoulders, with a parting in the middle, after the manner of the Nazarenes. His brow is smooth and most serene; his face is without any spot or wrinkle, and glows with a delicate flush. His nose and mouth are of faultless contour; the beard is abundant, and hazel-coloured like his hair, not long but forked. His eyes are prominent, brilliant, and change their colour. In denunciation he is terrible; in admonition, calm and loving, cheerful, but with unimpaired dignity. He has never been seen to laugh, but oftentimes to weep.

His hands and his limbs are beautiful to look upon. In speech he is grave, reserved, modest; and he is fair among the children of men." No doubt this represents the idealized portrait which the Christian consciousness gradually constructed.[1]

I

Let us now turn to the Gospel narrative. We find nothing which would indicate to us in any way what was the appearance of Christ. What we do gather is that there was something in His personality which marvellously impressed all those who came in contact with Him. He speaks with authority. He was capable of strong indignation when moved. He was one to whom men came. He was full of sympathy and pity. He called children to Himself and rebuked those who made objections. He was sympathetic with the sinner and the outcast. His anger was reserved for those who misrepresented religion.

If we turn to His intellectual qualities, we should notice, I think, extraordinary simplicity and power, a simplicity which is the result of power. It is obvious, as I think, that the sayings of Jesus came from one who had lived in the country, and was fond of the country, and was observant of country things. His parables and proverbial sayings are full of such allusions. They are not literary in character; they are based on real observation. In teaching,

[1] I am indebted for this information to the article on "Christ in Art," by the Rev. Percy Dearmer, in the *Dictionary of Christ and the Gospels*, vol. i., p. 315.

He was simple and impressive. He had the power of rousing attention and of stimulating thought by expressions which were almost paradoxical, yet in their essence true. In controversy He showed wonderful power of turning aside the point of a difficult question and making His answer teach a deep lesson. When He was asked, "Is it lawful to give tribute to Cæsar?" it was intended to put Him into an extremely difficult position. If He said "Yes," it would destroy His religious influence, so it was thought. If He said "No," it would give the opportunity of accusing Him of being disloyal. The answer that He does give, "Render unto Cæsar the things that are Cæsar's, and to God the things that are God's," takes one right to the centre of all the difficult questions which arise concerning the relation of the State and the Church.

We turn to His religious life and we learn how often He retired from His disciples for prayer; that there was between Him and His Father an intimate personal association which is from time to time revealed to us.

II

In such a way would He appear, no doubt, to those who came in contact with Him. But now we must try and get deeper in our analysis. The first thing that we are told about Him was that He spoke with authority and not as the scribes. What exactly did that mean? Did it refer only to His manner, or did it refer also to the things He said? I think it must have meant both. We turn, for example, to the Sermon on the Mount and study His relation to

the Jewish Law. What an assumption of authority is there! The Law was the most sacred thing in the world, and yet Jesus claims to have power to supersede it. Take His relation to the Sabbath. "The Son of man is lord also of the sabbath." What a contrast to the traditional teaching! And when He called people to Him, "Come unto me, all ye that are weary and heavy laden, and I will give you rest," what an assumption of power there was in this! And then He claimed to forgive sins, "Her sins, which are many, are forgiven her, because she loved much." Was it not natural that the orthodox theologians of the day should have accused Him of blasphemy? Quite clearly it was blasphemy, unless He had the power to speak thus. So that if we set aside anything in the nature of direct teaching and merely consider the words and language of our Lord, it seems to take us outside the limits of the teaching of the ordinary prophet or religious reformer.

And then there was clearly an exhibition of great spiritual power. It showed itself in many ways. We are told that Jesus knew what was in man. He had an insight different to that of ordinary men into those who came in contact with Him. It showed itself in relation to those possessed by evi- spirits. There was no class of persons who seemed to represent human misery more than these, who might thus be described. At the present day, when any who suffer from mental aberration, great or small, are moved to institutions and carefully looked after, it is difficult for us to conceive what must have been the state of ancient society, when there

was no such provision made, and the epileptic and the paralyzed had nothing before them but to live on the charity of others, when the lunatic and the madman were left loose in society, unless perhaps restrained by being tied sometimes with chains, but with no one to care for them and nothing to alleviate their mental agony. The psychologists of the day explained these and many other infirmities as resulting from demoniacal possession, and Jesus does nothing to correct this opinion, but clearly He had a power, account for it how you will or describe it how you may, which enabled him to alleviate and cure these sufferings. "With power he commanded the unclean spirits." His enemies recognized this power and made it an accusation against Him that He was leagued with evil spirits. On no ordinary critical grounds can we doubt for a moment that the description that is given us of His power over evil spirits is historically correct.

But it was not only the mentally afflicted that He relieved. He healed the sick. Of this again there can be no doubt. The stories of healing are contained in all our sources. The value of the evidence is increased by the fact that we are told that sometimes He could not do it. He needed the response of faith to be able to exercise His power. He always emphasizes the faith of those who came to Him as the cause of their cure. The rationalist of a former generation refused to believe these stories at all and invented every sort of means for evading the evidence. The psychologists of the present day would accept them and say that the phenomena were purely natural. I do not know that this last

explanation is more satisfactory than the former. If the narratives are truthful, and they show every sign of being so, they are quite unlike any of the attempted or supposed cures which take place at the present day, for there is a consciousness of power in the actions of Jesus which is fundamentally contrary to anything that we can experience. It is recognized that mind has, to a certain extent and in some ways, power over the body, and that one mind has power over the mind of another and can move it and strengthen it. There is a subtle influence between mind and mind, though it requires for its exercise some feeling of reciprocity. Considerations such as these will help us to a certain extent to understand the work of Jesus. But the narrative implies a spiritual force and power far exceeding anything that modern experience would justify.

We may further remark about the miracles ascribed to our Lord certain other facts. He conceals rather than emphasizes what He has accomplished. He rarely appeals to them as evidence. He does not lay stress upon them. Such abstention was really entirely natural when we begin to understand the meaning of His ministry. He did not wish or desire to be looked upon as a mere thaumaturgist. His miracles seem to come from His power. He used it to alleviate suffering and distress, and not to exalt His own personality. He went about doing good. This is the essence of His ministry, and His miracles were the natural illustration of what He desired to accomplish.

But besides miracles of healing, there were also in the Gospels nature miracles. It is quite obvious

that any rationalistic or semi-rationalistic explanation of these is impossible. It is quite obvious that, if they are correctly reported, they represent something inexplicable on naturalistic lines, and we reach, as always in our investigation in the life of our Lord, a point where we must either distrust our testimony or admit the supernatural. But for a miracle like that of the feeding of the multitude there are not any sufficient critical grounds for distrusting the testimony. That story is as well authenticated as any other in the Gospels. If we explain it away, or if we disregard it, it must be because we do not feel able to accept it on other than critical grounds.[1]

To pause at the point that we have so far reached —if we study the Gospels, our Lord is presented to us as one of great personal power, of wonderful sympathy, of intellectual distinction, of deep religious inspiration. Both in His manner and in His teaching there is an element of authority which seems to take us above the limits of the teaching of a prophet, and He had a spiritual power which it is difficult not to think was abnormal in its character.

[1] There are some who find it more impressive to believe that these stories of feeding really refer to the feeding of the soul by the Word. If such an interpretation is adopted it must be recognized that the reason is not critical but philosophical or theological. The evidence is good; in my opinion very good. The narrative of a great feeding was found by S. Mark, as it seems to me, in two sources, and must therefore go back to a very early date. Moreover, I find it hard not to think that S. John had some further sources than S. Mark, for he adds information which he was not likely to have invented. I do not mean that we have demonstrative evidence; such evidence is impossible, and the ultimate opinion will be dependent upon the conception that we form of the nature of our Lord's ministry.

III

Perhaps I ought to speak for a moment of the modern attitude with regard to miracles. I do not think people would care to press too far at the present time the argument that they are inconsistent with the laws of nature, for the whole conception of natural law has been altered. We are not prepared to say that the universe is a closed system, governed by certain laws, clear and well known. We recognize that what we call laws are but imperfect generalizations, summing up to the best of our ability our knowledge of the working of nature, and we are becoming more and more conscious of the limitations of scientific truth. After all, the laws of nature, as described one hundred years ago, were quite different from the laws which are described now. There is a continual modification of scientific teaching. Now all this shows us that our knowledge of the workings of nature is singularly limited. We cannot, then, argue on *a priori* grounds that anything is possible or not possible.

Another objection that has been taken is that miracles are inconsistent with experience. That is, of course, quite true, but if we are never to believe anything which is inconsistent with experience we could not have any new experience. The fundamental claim of Christianity concerning the life and teaching of Christ is that it was throughout something inconsistent with previous human experience. It is, therefore, somewhat illogical to rule out a thing because it is inconsistent with

experience, when that is the very ground on which the appeal is made.

What I think is the argument which appeals to people with a modern mind is that to work by miracles seems to be inconsistent with God's methods. If He has established certain principles of uniformity in nature, and works always in accordance with these, is it, then, likely that He would allow such anomalies to exist as miracles must be from that point of view? It is, we realize more and more, through the customary uniformity of nature that God works, and not by doing anything inconsistent with or opposed to it. How inconsistent with His whole method would be such a breach of Divine law! But surely the difficulty simply arises because we are looking at the world from one side. If you look at the world from the point of view of your scientific discoveries, no doubt there is something anomalous in this breach of scientific rule. But if you look at it from the point of view of Divine working, it no more becomes anomalous. It represents God's method of instructing the world. What, from the limited standpoint of the study of nature, may seem to be inconsistent with His methods, from the point of view of His moral and spiritual action may be in accordance with it. I do not think that ultimately any scientific man will hold that you can rule miracles out on *a priori* grounds. He would exercise suspension of judgment. But if, on the other hand, we look at things from what we may call God's purpose in the world, what appears as a breach of the normal methods of Divine working will represent just what

would harmonize with such a purpose. After all, the scientific point of view is not the Divine point of view. It is our view. God's view means the gradual working out of a Divine purpose, and if miracles take their proper place in that, we cannot consider them inconsistent with God's methods in the world.

IV

To return to the Gospel narratives, what next do we gather about the person, the mission, and the nature of our Lord? At the beginning of His ministry comes the story of the temptation. That, if it be authentic, must have come from Himself, and it is difficult to believe that it is not authentic, for it contains a representation of the problem He had to meet, which we can hardly believe would have occurred to the writers of the time. We are not concerned with the literal truth of the narrative as it stands. Origen first pointed out that its literal interpretation was neither necessary nor appropriate. What it does represent is the temptation to which Jesus felt Himself exposed. He was conscious both of the greatness of His mission and of the greatness of His power, and He had the natural temptations of any man with such knowledge and conceptions. How easy it would be to alleviate His own sufferings and, no doubt, the sufferings of mankind by creating a world of absolute plenty! Why not command that the stones be made bread? Why not make the world one where there was no want or need? How natural to desire to dazzle the world by a display of His powers! Surely, too, the appropriate way for the Messiah to work was to

build up a kingdom, a kingdom like that of the surrounding nations. But how absolutely inconsistent were all these methods with the purpose and significance of His ministry! Man did not live by bread alone. Jesus, from the beginning, came with a spiritual message, to remind mankind that spiritual things were first and material things second; that it mattered a great deal whether they lived righteously; that it mattered very little whether they lived comfortably or whether they suffered. But none of these things, if He had attempted them, would have altered the spiritual life of the world. To give people plenty without exertion of their own, to attract them to Himself, not by the spiritual power of His teaching, but by His wonder-working miracles and to build up a kingdom of force; none of these things would have increased the spiritual character of mankind by a single point. Yet clearly that would be our temptation. It is a temptation of people at the present time to concern themselves with the material conditions and think that this is Christianity, or to believe that by an appeal to the State and by government methods we can reform the world. Jesus rejected the temptation and carried out His mission as something spiritual and religious. Now this story, if it be rightly interpreted, implied a consciousness of more than human power on the part of Jesus.

But now what did He claim to be? In the first place, let us be quite clear about this: you cannot understand the narrative unless you recognize that He thought himself to be the Messiah, and that from the beginning He had thought thus of His ministry.

The words spoken at His baptism, "Thou art my Son, my beloved," imply that He was the Son of God of the Psalms, and the Servant of the Lord, spoken of in Isaiah. As the Messiah, He looked upon Himself as fulfilling all the elements of thought in the Old Testament. Thus it becomes Him to fulfil all righteousness. "I am not come to destroy, but to fulfil." The difference between His conception and the current conception of the Messiah was that He realized that all the elements of thought in the Old Testament must be fulfilled in Himself, and so for the first time we find the Servant of the Lord and the suffering Servant brought into the conception.

Difficulties have been found in the fact that He does not begin by preaching Himself as the Messiah. From any point of view, would that be the right course? What credentials had He for such a claim? His method was surely something quite different. He began by preaching the Kingdom, but in His teaching, in His life, in His personal intercourse with His disciples, He gradually made them feel that He was something more than a prophet. Had He come to them simply claiming to be the Messiah, they would not have accepted Him, or they would have accepted Him exactly in the sense that He did not desire. They would have been prepared, as the multitude in the desert were prepared, to make Him a king, but they would not have learnt the lesson He had to teach. So He began by making them realize who He was. The disciples, through intercourse with Him, through His teaching, through His miracles, through His

personality, at length learnt to confess that He was the Messiah; and then the time came to correct their erroneous conceptions of what the Messiah meant and stood for.

As the Messiah, Jesus spoke of Himself as the Son of man. There has been much speculation as to the origin and meaning of the phrase. What did it mean at the time when it was used? What did Jesus mean by it? It has been suggested that he never used the expression Himself. An attempt has been made to prove that, in all cases, the expression, Son of man, was introduced into the narrative by the Christian Church. Now it is probably true that in some cases where it is used in one or other Gospel it has been introduced. We find difference of phraseology between S. Matthew and S. Luke, and we cannot therefore be certain what the original words were. The expression Son of man may well have been introduced in some cases. But that would not have been possible unless the phrase was one of those contained elsewhere in the sources, as having been used by Jesus. It is a well-known fact that, while the expression Son of man is constantly used in the Gospels, it is only once used in the rest of the New Testament. Even if it was used in the apostolic Church, it was very soon dropped, for it had little meaning outside Jewish circles. We may be willing to find corruptions of the early tradition owing to the influence of later thought, but it is really too much to suggest that a phrase which was never, or hardly ever, used in the apostolic age, crept into the record of the life of our Lord and left no trace in later literature.

The term Son of man had been used by the writer of the Book of Enoch, and no doubt by others; but as a synonym for the Messiah its origin was a passage in Daniel, which speaks of one "like unto a Son of man coming with the Ancient of Days." Whatever had been the meaning in Daniel, the phrase had no doubt become a definite name used for the Messiah and intended for Him, although perhaps not widely known. But the words occur elsewhere in the Old Testament. They occur in the Book of Ezekiel as a designation of the prophet, and they occur in the Psalms, and these passages would help in the development of its meaning. It has been maintained that the expression Son of man could not exist as a title in Aramaic, because it is generally used as a synonym for man, and that that was the meaning in the Gospels. But it is difficult to see how that position can be maintained. Clearly it is a title in Ezekiel. Clearly it is a title in Enoch. I fail to see, therefore, why it should not be a title in the Gospels.

Nor must we attempt to give it different meanings in different passages. It is used throughout the Gospels, as we have them now, as a quite definite title. The Book of Enoch would suggest to us that originally the expression was used of the Messiah as the judge, of the supernatural Messiah, and we find it so employed in the Gospels. The Son of man is to come into the world to judge the world, and when Jesus used this phrase, He must inevitably have been thinking of that conception. It was part of the definite claim that He made, to be the judge of mankind. But Jesus saw always the contrast

between His Divine claims and His humiliation, and it seems to be purposely used in particular reference to the life of humiliation. "Foxes have holes and the birds of the air have nests, but the Son of man hath not where to lay his head."[1] There is no reason for thinking that these words did not come from our Lord Himself, and there is obviously much point in contrasting the Divine claims associated with the idea of the Son of man with the humiliation to which Jesus was exposed. And so it is always the expression, the Son of man, that is used in relation to prophecies of His death and passion, and this both by the Evangelists and by our Lord. Taking, then, the narrative just as we have it, and it is a perfectly natural and explicable one, the use of the term Son of man implied a definite claim of Jesus to be judge of the world, and taught also the contrast between the life of humiliation and the life of glory.

Then Jesus claimed to be, in a particular way, the Son of God. It is quite true that He is not often represented in the Synoptic Gospels as calling Himself the Son of God. It is, indeed, extremely probable that He rarely did so. It would have been to put the Messianic claim in a way for which the people were not ready. But what the Gospel narrative does show is that throughout Jesus represents Himself as having a special relation to the Father. "At that time Jesus answered and said, I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes. Even so, Father: for so it seemed good in

[1] Matt. viii. 20.

thy sight. All things are delivered unto me of my Father: and no man knoweth the Son, but the Father; neither knoweth any man the Father, save the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son will reveal Him."[1] This passage occurs in one of our earliest sources and it is not an isolated one.

I would ask you now to consider the impression which must be left upon us by this analysis of the representation of the personality of Jesus. For a certain way in our analysis we might have felt that we were studying one who was a religious genius and perhaps nothing more. But gradually as we proceed I do not think that explanation is really possible. The total impression which is left upon us by the actions and words of Jesus, by His teaching and His claims, is of someone who transcends the conditions of human life. We may be able to get rid of this conception by eliminating much of the narrative, but let us be quite clear that we eliminate it, not on critical grounds, but because we do not like the conclusion to which we are forced.

[1] Matt. xi. 25-27.

LECTURE V

THE DEATH OF JESUS

THE DEATH OF JESUS

I COME to-day to the last scene of the life of Jesus, and I propose to discuss the following four points:

1. The purpose of Jesus in coming to Jerusalem.

2. The significance of the events during His residence there.

3. Certain incidents in the story of the Passion.

4. The historical significance of the death of Christ.

It is, of course, obvious that in a single lecture all that I can do is to emphasize certain points.

First of all a critical question—How far can we trust the narrative of the Passion? Those who are acquainted with critical writings will be aware that a certain number of scholars are anxious to prove that almost the whole story is an edifying fiction written very largely to show the fulfilment of prophecy.

If we ask for any proof of this attitude we get none, and if we examine the writers we find that there is no agreement between them as to what they admit or reject. Throughout, their method is to rule out what does not harmonize with the theory they have formed—a method which does not seem to me entirely satisfactory. But, of course, there are

difficulties in some points of the narrative, and I would suggest to you the following points for your consideration.[1]

1. There is no reason for thinking that sufficient knowledge did not exist of the trial and death of Jesus. When I say sufficient, I mean, of course, sufficient for the purpose of the writers. I do not mean that there is the accurate description of procedure which would be looked for in a law report. There were many persons present who would have been quite well able to report what happened. There is no reason for thinking that the trials were in private. The Crucifixion was public. There must have been friends and followers of Jesus among the bystanders, even if the disciples who fled had remained away and not come quietly back. There is no reason, in fact, for thinking that there would not be sufficient evidence for the events which happened, or that there was not the possibility of giving not necessarily a detailed but an adequate account of the different incidents.

2. On the other hand, when an event is dependent

[1] The four accounts that we have of the Crucifixion give each of them independent incidents, but I cannot think that we have more than one connected narrative. S. Matthew clearly follows S. Mark, and the same appears to me to be true both of S. Luke and S. John. I cannot see sufficient evidence for supposing that S. Luke had an independent account. He had undoubtedly, when he was in Jerusalem, collected many stories of the Passion, and these he fits into the story as told by S. Mark, which he follows somewhat loosely; but I do not see any signs of a second complete history. The same is true of S. John. The account in S. Mark was before the author of the Gospel, but he deals with it still more freely than S. Luke, omitting much, inserting what I believe are independent traditions, and amplifying what harmonized with his purpose.

on unwritten testimony, which must have been the case with this story—at any rate, at first—there will always be a tendency to inaccuracy in detail, and this there clearly is. There are definite discrepancies as to dates. We cannot be certain, for example, whether we have to follow S. John or S. Mark as to the date of the Anointing. And then further, although we have a good deal of incident, we have not here any more than in other parts of the Gospel the data necessary to enable us to construct a detailed narrative.

3. In such a history there would undoubtedly be a tendency to find a religious significance, and this might apply specially to the fulfilment of prophecy. But I cannot help thinking that critics carry this principle too far. It is much more likely, on the whole, that they would find a text in the Old Testament which might seem to have been fulfilled by the events they are describing than that they should imagine the events so as to suggest a fulfilment of prophecy. Take, for example, the breaking of the legs recorded in S. John. This is certainly a natural incident. The *crucifragium*, as it was called, was a well-known method of putting a criminal to death. Obviously if, as was probable, the Crucifixion took place before the first day of the Feast, the Jews would demand that the bodies should not be left on the cross during the Passover. That the officials, whether directed by Pilate or not, should have taken formal steps to see that the criminals were dead and should then take the bodies down from the cross was entirely natural. Supposing that this event did happen, it was equally natural that the Evangelist

should find texts in the Old Testament which seemed thus to have been fulfilled, but is it really probable that he invented these incidents in order to bring about the fulfilment of the text that he quoted? There is some but not great importance in the text, "A bone of him shall not be broken," but surely there is very little in the text, "They shall look on him whom they pierced"; and can we really believe that the story of the piercing of our Lord's side was invented by S. John so as to give a fulfilment to a passage quite obscure and not very obviously Messianic. Surely this is very far-fetched. We might take other incidents. It was the usual custom for the soldiers to have as their perquisite the garments of the criminals, and the scene of the division of the garments and even of the gambling for them is quite natural. Whether it was made a little more explicit in order to make it harmonize accurately with the text which is quoted is another matter. But is it probable that the incident was invented so as to create a fulfilment of the text, "They parted my raiment among them, and for my vesture they did cast lots"? It was not the obvious text to turn to or to desire the fulfilment of.

4. It is quite probable that there are some incidents recorded which are not historical. Undoubtedly when strong personal interest is aroused stories will tend to shape themselves expressing that interest. We cannot, therefore, be quite certain of the historical truth of every incident recorded: we must allow for the working of pious imagination; but as the events harmonize together it is not in the least likely that the story generally was invented.

It is, however, possible in a particular case that some story which struck the imagination as natural to the circumstances may have grown up. The position is really the same as it is with regard to the whole life of Our Lord. Just as there we have not the material for constructing a detailed biography, and we cannot be certain of the historical character of every event, yet we have adequate material for knowing the general character of that life. So we cannot write a detailed narrative of the trial or be certain of the correct answer to certain legal questions, but we can have no doubt that from the point of view of their religious significance the events have been correctly described and recorded.

I

Let me now take up the narrative where it was left in a previous lecture. Jesus, during the autumn and winter, had been preaching, as S. Mark tells us, through Judæa and Peræa. If, as I believe, we may trust S. John, a considerable part of that time must have been spent in Jerusalem. It is quite doubtful, in fact, whether all the incidents recorded in the Gospels as having taken place at Jerusalem really took place during the week of the Passion; there would be a tendency to group them together round the great event. Both S. Matthew and S. Luke would place at this period any stories that they heard about our Lord's activity in Jerusalem, for they had no record of any other visit. Everywhere where our Lord had been preaching He had prepared men for the Coming of the Kingdom. Other preachers—the twelve and the seventy—had

been spreading the same message, and a general expectation had been created that great events were going to happen at the Feast. The ground had been prepared. There were disciples in Jerusalem; there were disciples throughout Judæa and Peræa. Meanwhile from Galilee there came up a great body of Galilæan disciples (how numerous we have no means of knowing), probably under the leadership of Peter and other Apostles, and somewhere beyond Jordan Jesus, who had retired from Jerusalem to Peræa, joins them.

Here is S. Mark's account:

"Now they were in the way going up to Jerusalem; and Jesus was going before them: and they were amazed; and as they followed they were afraid. And once more he took unto him the twelve."[1]

Whenever you come across a passage like this in S. Mark which the other Gospels omit, you may begin to expect there is some significance in it. Why were the disciples astonished? Why were they afraid? And why are we specially told that Jesus *again* took the disciples to Himself? It is interesting to notice that some of the manuscripts omit the word "again," which seemed to have no purpose, but there is no doubt about the reading. It was omitted by the copyists as it was omitted by S. Matthew and S. Luke because they did not understand its significance. Now, if you assume that here you have the description of Jesus joining once more the great body of the disciples on their way to Jerusalem, the meaning of the passage becomes

[1] Mark x. 32.

apparent. They are making their way as other pilgrims had done before along the pilgrim road, and suddenly they see Jesus walking at the head of their company. Naturally a feeling of wonder and awe comes upon them, and once more, as so often before, Jesus takes the twelve to Himself and begins to talk to them, and He tells them what they are to expect at Jerusalem. But whatever fears He may have, Jesus goes on His way adhering steadily to His purpose.

Let me now pass to the entering into Jerusalem. This was clearly something that Jesus had planned. He had spent the night in Bethany (so S. John leads us to understand), and no doubt He made arrangements for what He required, and the event was to be one of great significance. S. John tells us what is quite natural: that a multitude came out from Jerusalem to meet Jesus. He rides in with a great company preceding and following Him—the company from Jerusalem who were expecting Him and the company from Galilee who had met Him beyond Jericho. The event was full of significance. The story itself puzzles some of our Commentators. It is said that it was written afterwards to bring out the Messianic character of the life of Jesus. I do not think that we need have recourse to any such hypothesis. It is an event which reveals to us, and it was intended to reveal to us, the purpose of Jesus and the means that He adopted for carrying the purpose out. He had come to Jerusalem to claim to be the Messiah, but He wished also to reveal to the world what sort of Messiah He was. He had often told His disciples about the Kingdom—then He had alienated many who were anxious to come

to Him because He refused to take the obvious step of being proclaimed King. In His parables He had interpreted the idea of the Kingdom, and now it was time that He made His claim known to the world. I have maintained that Jesus had modelled His thoughts on the spiritual interpretation of the Old Testament. He had not generally paid much attention to the conventional signs of the coming of the Messiah, with which Jewish scholasticism was no doubt much concerned. But here was a prophecy which would make quite clear just what He wanted. Zechariah had said: "Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion; shout, O daughter of Jerusalem: behold, thy King cometh unto thee: He is just, and having salvation; lowly, and riding upon an ass, even upon a colt the foal of an ass."[1] Now, if Jesus had fulfilled this prophecy, no one would doubt that He claimed to be considered the Messiah. He had revealed Himself on the Mount of Olives as the Prophet had foretold, "And his feet shall stand in that day upon the Mount of Olives."[2] He had had relations with Jerusalem. He was now preparing officially to enter in, not, indeed, as Jeremiah had foretold with a body of kings and princes, riding in chariots and horses, but riding on an ass, as Zechariah had foretold. He had proclaimed Himself as "just," "bringing salvation," "meek and lowly." People, if they try to think about it, may learn what sort of Messiah Jesus is. It soon becomes much more clear, and when the disappointment comes, just as before in Galilee, He finds quickly that many fall away from Him.

[1] Zech. ix. 9. [2] *Ibid.*, xiv. 4.

With what thoughts and purpose, then, did Jesus go to Jerusalem? He went publicly to proclaim Himself as Messiah and inaugurate publicly the Kingdom of Heaven. But He would do this in His way, which was God's way, and not the way of the world, not by force or by power. He would proclaim a bloodless revolution. That was His first thought. I have tried elsewhere to make it clear that from the beginning of His ministry Jesus recognized Himself as the Messiah, and that there had been a definite method in His work. He had two tasks, the one to convince the world of His Messiahship, the other to make His followers understand the real meaning of the Kingdom and the real character of the Messiah. He had appealed to the people. Some had followed Him, some had ultimately fallen away. He had trained His disciples, and He had taught them the true meaning of the Kingdom and the true character of His Mission. He had then made all the preparations that were necessary for the proclamation of the Messiah. He had announced to all parts of the sacred land that the Kingdom of Heaven was at hand. He had, as we may conjecture, summoned His followers to Jerusalem to the Feast of the Passover. At that feast He would fulfil His message and proclaim Himself as the Messiah.

II

The first step that He took was to dominate the Temple. The cleansing of the Temple was primarily a work of moral authority, but it could not have

been accomplished unless Jesus had had the support of a considerable body of enthusiastic followers. He cleansed the Temple, and for two or three days He dominated it, but He did not use His position for any other purpose than as a place of teaching. The Temple was a fortress of great strength, and consequently whenever a false Messiah had appeared he had always aimed at seizing it and then making it the basis of his military enterprises.[1] That is, no doubt, what it would be assumed that Jesus would do, but it is just what He did not do. Having secured His position in the Temple He used it simply as a place for His teaching. But the chief priests and other authorities would feel that the position had become dangerous. Here was a Prophet who had come from Galilee who quite clearly was acting as if He was the Messiah. He was surrounded by a body of enthusiastic followers, how numerous we do not know, and they did not know. He had quietly taken possession of the Temple. What reason for doubting that He would continue in the same course as other pretenders before Him? They had seized the Temple, and it had needed a good deal of violence to rescue it from them, so naturally preparations would begin to be made for dealing with this situation. No one wanted to have the sort of rebellion they had had before. It is quite true that the purpose of Jesus was different, but they did not know that.

Jesus, then, supported by His followers, takes possession of the Temple and there begins teaching.

[1] Illustrations of this are afforded by the events at the death of Herod the Great. Josephus, *Antt.* XVII., 254 *sq.*, *B.J.*, ii., 39 *sq.*

Quite naturally the first attempt against Him was one to undermine His authority. The Evangelist gives us a series of stories telling us how different classes, Pharisees, Herodians, Scribes, and so on, tried to weaken His position by asking Him questions. We have seen how on other occasions a number of incidents have been arranged together by the Evangelist to bring out the historical position. It is not necessary to think that all these events happened consecutively as they are narrated. They are collected rather to show us the criticisms which were passed upon the teaching of Jesus and to allow us to see how He attained complete moral superiority over all His opponents.

As regards the general teaching of our Lord, no doubt He might repeat much that He had said elsewhere; but as recorded by the Evangelists certain new points became prominent, and there is a different note. Jesus was, we can see, preparing for the accomplishment of His purpose. There is, first of all, a clear repudiation of the accepted religious leaders of the nation. They questioned His authority and He denounced them.

"Verily I say unto you, that the publicans and the harlots go into the kingdom of God before you. For John came unto you in the way of righteousness, and ye believed him not: but the publicans and the harlots believed him: and ye, when ye saw it, did not even repent yourselves afterward, that ye might believe him."[1]

And he followed this by a strong denunciation of Scribes and Pharisees. S. Mark tells us this

[1] Matt. xxi. 31, 32.

explicitly. S. Matthew, as is usual with him, takes this opportunity for concentrating together in one place everything recorded that our Lord had said against Scribes and Pharisees, including matter which is given by S. Luke in another context. There is no reason to think that Jesus' denunciation of the religious leaders of Judaism was confined to this occasion. He had often been compelled to be in contact with them. They had often attacked Him and He had replied. But it is probable enough that things now reached a climax. He was present in Jerusalem, which was the centre of their power; and what in Galilee was a distant menace, here was a present reality. But, further, it was essential that He should make it quite clear what was His purpose and message. And one thing was that their rabbinical development was an intolerable perversion of religion. It was just the sort of false religion which the Old Testament prophets had denounced. It was entirely inconsistent with the whole of Jesus' teaching. It had become an evil burden on human life and human intelligence. Jesus was founding the Kingdom, and it must be understood that nothing of this sort was consistent with it.

It is the fashion nowadays for some of the more superior critics of the Gospel to condemn these denunciations. I do not know any reason for such superiority. We have the good fortune to be able to see exactly what Pharisaism meant and what it would lead to. We have preserved for us a full record of rabbinic erudition. It is not true to say that there is nothing of merit in it. That would not

be likely, for however perverted it may be, it is based on the Old Testament revelation. But it is quite safe to say that it is, perhaps, the most intolerable record of human unreason that exists. Nor are there any grounds for thinking that the moral condemnation was not equally deserved. The Pharisees represented the perversion of the religious spirit in its most extreme form, and the evils from which the Jews were to suffer were very much the outcome of their influence.

But it was not only as against them that the nature of the Kingdom must be defended. Jesus foresaw clearly the evils which were to come upon Jerusalem and the separation of the Kingdom of God from the chosen people. "The Kingdom of God shall be taken away from you and shall be given to a nation bringing forth the fruits thereof."[1] Nor do I think that we need have any doubt that He foresaw and foretold the miseries that the people of Israel were to suffer. "Daughters of Jerusalem, weep not for me, but weep for yourselves and your children. For behold the days are coming, in which they will say, Blessed are the barren and the wombs that never bare, and the breasts which never gave suck."[2] And then there is the warning that Jesus gave to His followers, the importance of which S. Mark emphasized by adding the words, "Let him that readeth understand," a warning which we are told the Christian Church remembered and acted upon:

"But when ye see the abomination of desolation standing where it ought not then let them which

[1] Matt. xxi. 43. [2] Luke xxiii. 28, 29.

are in Judæa flee unto the mountains . . . and pray ye that it be not in the winter. For those days shall be tribulation, such as there hath not been the like from the beginning of the creation which God created until now."[1]

And Jesus wished to make it quite clear that the Kingdom of God was to be dissociated from all thought of an earthly kingdom. He had no support to give to the zealot any more than to the Pharisee or the Sadducee, "Render unto Cæsar the things that are Cæsar's, and unto God the things that are God's."[2]

The records of Jesus' words during these days in Jerusalem are sufficient to make it clear that He was preaching the Kingdom, and that He dissociated Himself from all the contemporary interpretations of it. The chief priest and Pharisees combined against a common enemy, they had their revenge, and their punishment came: "If they do these things in the green tree, what shall be done in the dry?"[3] How far the people failed Him we cannot calculate, just as we cannot tell how large was His support. We know that there was a crowd which cried, "Crucify him!" in the Prætorium, but it need not have been large, and there were many that wept.

And all the time the true nature of the Kingdom was being revealed. It was revealed when He said: "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, and with all thy strength," and "Thou shalt love

[1] Mark xiii. 14-19. [2] *Ibid.*, xii. 17.
[3] Luke xxiii. 31.

thy neighbour as thyself."[1] It was revealed in the correction that was continually being made in the apocalyptic idea. Our Lord uses the conventional language and method of expression, but it is not necessary to take it literally any more than such language as that of the sheep and the goats, but always the ethical basis becomes more emphasized: "I was an hungred, and ye gave me meat: I was thirsty, and ye gave me drink: I was a stranger, and ye took me in; naked, and ye clothed me; I was sick, and ye visited me; I was in prison, and ye came unto me. . . . Inasmuch as ye did it unto one of these my brethren, even these least, ye did it unto me."[2]

Meantime the authorities were making their preparations. The reasons for the arrest and condemnation of Jesus are apparent. There was first of all, and this would be the attitude mainly of the Sadducees and the priests of the Temple, the danger of revolt and the fear of the Romans. As S. John tells us: "The chief priests and the Pharisees therefore gathered a council and said, What do we? for this man doeth many miracles. If we let him alone, all men will believe on him; and the Romans will come and take away both our place and nation. But a certain one of them, Caiaphas, being high priest that year, said unto them, Ye know nothing at all, nor do ye take account it is expedient for you that one man should die for the people and that the whole nation perish not. . . . So from that day forth they took counsel that they might put him to death."[3] Whether S. John is right in ascribing this council and this speech of Caiaphas to an earlier

[1] Mark xii. 30, 31. [2] Matt. xxv. 35-40. [3] John xi. 47 53.

period or not, we have not, perhaps, sufficient grounds for determining. There is no reason at all why we should assume, as some critics do, that his point of view is necessarily unhistorical. But in any case this represents the natural position that would be taken by those who were responsible to the Romans for law and order.

Then, secondly, there was, of course, the growing opposition on His part to the authorities, and the criticism of their position from a religious standpoint. The breach had begun far back in Galilee. A deputation had come down from Jerusalem at that time and had enquired into what was going on there. His attitude towards the law, the Sabbath, and so on, was quite well understood. Jesus wished to purify and spiritualize the religion of the Jews. He wished to take Israel back to the teaching of the Prophets, but neither Sadducees nor Pharisees desired that. Both alike were unable to understand or see what he was aiming at. He was a religious rival, a religious rival who shocked the more sincere among them by His claims or what were believed to be His claims to be the Messiah.

There was, thirdly, so far as we can gather, a definite personal hostility which had been aroused. We are told that the stalls within the Temple area were part of the property of the family of Annas. They represented the rich and corrupt priesthood who made their wealth out of the services of the Temple and out of the booths which they owned. The destruction of all these and the driving out of those who bought and sold was a direct injury to the most influential section of the priesthood.

Then, finally, we have to believe that He had aroused their anger by denouncing them. He was claiming to found the Kingdom, but had definitely said that the official Jewish priest and the religious leaders would alike be excluded.

But it was necessary for them to proceed with caution. Experience had shown how excitable were the people at the time of the Passover. Revolt and bloodshed might be feared. How far or how great was the hold of Jesus on the people was not known, and therefore they had recourse to caution and treachery.

III

We now come to the story of the Passion and Crucifixion. First as to the date. I need not remind you that there is what seems an obvious discrepancy between the Gospel of S. John and the Synoptic Gospels as to the date of the Crucifixion. According to the Synoptic Gospels, the Last Supper was the Passover, and the Crucifixion took place on the first day of the Feast. According to St. John's Gospel, the Crucifixion took place on the day before the Passover, on that day when the Paschal victim was sacrificed in the Temple. Various attempts have been made to reconcile the two dates, but they have never been of a character to win conviction. It has been suggested, for example, that, for some reason or other, our Lord ate the Passover a day earlier, but all probability is against any such theory.

The arguments in favour of the correctness of the date given by S. John seem to me very strong. In the first place, it is not in the least likely that the

Jews would have allowed the trial and the Crucifixion on the day of the Passover itself, and that is supported by the evidence of S. Mark, who begins his account of the Crucifixion: "After two days was the Feast of the Passover, and of unleavened bread: and the chief priests and the Scribes sought how they might take him by craft, and put him to death. But they said, Not on the feast day, lest there be an uproar of the people." That would seem to imply that the purpose of the Jewish authorities was to avoid an arrest and punishment during the time of the Feast, and would correspond with S. John's account.

Then, again, the evidence of S. Paul seems to carry weight. He definitely states that "Christ our Passover is sacrificed for us." He never identifies the Last Supper with the Passover, and he introduces his account with the words, "The Lord Jesus the same night in which he was betrayed took bread," not making any reference to the Passover as he might have done.

Nor, again, is it difficult to understand how it became possible for the Last Supper to be identified with the Passover. No doubt for the early Christian the fact that the Last Supper was celebrated at the time of the Passover would lead to the transference to it of all the associations connected with the Passover, and therefore the idea would naturally arise that it was an actual Paschal meal.

I think, therefore, all probability is in favour of S. John's date being the correct one. This, of course, implies that the Last Supper was not a Paschal meal, for I do not think that any suggestion that, for some reason or other, our Lord ate the

Passover on the wrong day, can be entertained. The fact that the lamb had to be sacrificed, and that all the lambs were offered at the same time in the Temple, would make such an arrangement impossible. Moreover, when we read the account, what is prominent is the idea of a Covenant sacrifice without any reference to the Paschal sacrifice. But though it was not the Passover, no doubt the minds both of our Lord and of the Apostles were filled with the associations of the Passover, and in interpreting its meaning we may quite legitimately read into it everything which is implied by that. As in the case of so many other Christian institutions, the Last Supper took over the traditions of Judaism, only universalized and spiritualized, and we may use the circumstances of the feast to enable us to interpret the meaning of the rite.

If we pass to the narrative of the trial, I think that we must be satisfied with a good deal of uncertainty on technical details. The circumstances of the trial of our Lord have been, as you know, investigated with very great care by a large number of writers. One of the most interesting is the work on *The Prosecution of Jesus*, by Professor Husband, who, when he wrote it, was Professor of the Classical Languages in Dartmouth College. So far as I have been able to study the subject, the conclusion I have come to is that we have not sufficient grounds for arriving at an accurate account.

In the first place, the Gospel narrative is, from this point of view, not sufficiently detailed or accurate. It was probably written by those unacquainted with judicial procedure: it was based

on sources derived from oral evidence. From the point of view of its religious significance, or the character of our Lord, its accuracy is sufficient: from the point of view of legal information it is not sufficient. I do not think we must ask it to do more than it claims to do.

Then, secondly, as regards Jewish procedure. I do not think our information is of the kind that will enable us to say either what did happen or what ought to have happened. We have, it is true, in the tract *Sanhedrin* of the *Mishnah*, a very full account of Jewish procedure, probably in the second century, but we do not know how far it records the customs of the academic bodies of the second century, which devoted themselves to trying Jews for religious offences, how far it preserves reminiscences of an early period, or how far it represents something which never was actually carried into practice—a scholastic ideal. I do not think that we are justified in arguing, for example, that what took place could not have been a trial for blasphemy or heresy before Jewish authorities, because it was unduly hurried. We do not know if the rules contained in the Talmud were then in force, and even if they were they might have been neglected for an emergency.

Then, thirdly, I do not think we have sufficient evidence of what was the Roman provincial custom; nor is it in the least necessary to think that what was the custom, for example, in a place like Egypt, with a well-established Greek civilization, would have been the custom in a place like Jerusalem, governed in quite a different way by a different class of officials We could not argue from the pro-

cedure under the British Empire in Mysore to the procedure in Cape Colony. Therefore I think that we cannot arrive at any very definite conclusions as to the method of the trial, and must be satisfied with a report popular in its character, and draw attention to those matters which are of religious import.

If we put together the accounts from the four Gospels it would suggest that there were five different investigations or trials, or whatever they might be: first, that before Annas; the second before Caiaphas during the night; thirdly, before the Sanhedrin next morning; fourthly, before Pilate; and, lastly, before Herod. Some suspicion has been thrown on the question whether the trials before Annas and Herod are historical. As regards the first, I find it difficult to think that the statement of S. John is not true. It seems difficult to see why the story should have grown up if the event did not happen, and it seems to me quite a probable incident. Annas was the power behind the throne, so to speak, the influence through whom the High Priests were largely appointed. If, as we are told, the stalls in the Temple, which our Lord had overthrown, were the property of his family, there would be a personal grievance as well. I cannot but think that here we have a correct historical tradition, and one which, like other things in S. John's Gospel, suggests that the author of it, or the disciple from whom the information contained in it came, was one who had an intimate acquaintance with Jerusalem. But I think it is quite possible that the enquiry in the house of Annas was the same as the first enquiry in the High Priest's house. We may notice that

S. Mark speaks of the High Priest's house and gives no name; the name may have been introduced by the later writers.

Nor, again, can I see any reason why Pilate should not have consulted Herod in a matter which concerned Jewish law and custom. Herod, as a Jew, would naturally have been in Jerusalem at the time of the Feast, and probably, like most other members of his family, had a palace there. The incident is quite reasonable in itself, and harmonizes with the fact that S. Luke appears to have fuller information than the other Gospels with regard to the family of Herod. My own belief is that, after a preliminary investigation, probably in the house of Annas, at which Caiaphas might have been present, our Lord was tried the next morning before the Sanhedrin, that He was condemned, that the proceedings were hurried—perhaps illegally hurried—on account of the nearness of the Feast, and that he was then brought before Pilate, who felt doubts on the matter. I think probably that the charge brought against Him before Pilate is stated most accurately in S. Luke's Gospel: "And the whole company of them rose up and brought him before Pilate. And they began to accuse him, saying, We found this man perverting our nation, and forbidding to give tribute to Cæsar, and saying that he himself is Christ a King."[1] I have no doubt that Pilate had considerable misgivings, and that it was the urgency of the Jews that led to our Lord's condemnation and death. But it is quite possible that this aspect was somewhat exaggerated by Christian tradition.

[1] Luke xxiii. 1, 2.

As regards the narrative of the Crucifixion, the main question that would be asked would be: How far can we consider the story an historical one in its present form, and how far has it been worked up in religious interests? It is, of course, dependent upon tradition, and there are certainly inaccuracies in detail; it would be very astonishing if there were not. On the other hand, I see no reason for thinking that the main outline of events and the incidents recorded cannot be true. I do not think, for example, it is reasonable to assume that the story of "the parting of the garments" was invented in order to find a fulfilment of a text. I think it is much more likely that something of the sort happened, as would naturally be the case, and that it may have been somewhat assimilated to the language of the text. We may not be quite certain of the accuracy of the different words which were used by our Lord, but that His death was of such a character as to make the heathen officer standing by the cross feel that He was the Son of God seems to me probable enough. After all, the death of Christ, both in its external manifestation and its theological bearing, must have been of such a character as to stir up the waning faith of His followers.

IV

I now propose to say something in conclusion about the theological interpretation of the death of Christ in relation to His own teaching. It has been maintained by various scholars—some in a more extreme form, some in a less extreme form—that the

predictions of our Lord's death contained in the Gospels, and the idea that He knew beforehand what His fate would be, and that He attached any significance to it, are not historical. They are part of the Paulinism of S. Mark's Gospel. It was S. Paul who first realized the religious significance of the death of Christ. It was his theology that impressed itself upon the Church and the author of the second Gospel, and created that section of the Gospel narrative which seems to refer to it. Now I would first point out that the attempt to ascribe this part of Christian theology to the initiative of S. Paul is contrary to his own express testimony. He himself tells us that he preached "what he had also received, how that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures." It was a part of his Gospel which he definitely said he had learnt from the Christian Church.

Then when we turn to the Gospel narrative I can see no grounds for this critical attitude. Let us take, in the first place, the fact that Jesus had from the beginning thought of Himself not merely as the Son of God but as the servant of Jehovah. His mind had been formed, if we may so speak, on a spiritual study of the Old Testament. He saw there all these deeper truths to which so much of the theology and exegesis of the day was blind. If He thought of Himself as the servant, He must have applied to Himself the passages about the suffering servant, and we have direct evidence that He did. In S. Luke's account of the Passion he quotes our Lord as saying, "I say unto you, that this which is written must yet be accomplished in me. And he was

reckoned among the transgressors: for the things concerning me have an end."[1] And there is a reminiscence of the same passage in the words, "The Son of man came not to be ministered unto but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many."[2]

Now, of course, it is possible to hold that these passages were introduced into the narrative at a later date, but I would put this to you. We know that our Lord thought of Himself as the servant. If He did so, it would be natural that He should apply to Himself the passages referring to death and suffering. If, then, we find that He is recorded to have done so, all probability is in favour of this record being correct.

Now it has been pointed out that the narrative of S. Mark contains a series of passages in which we are told that Jesus had predicted His death in Jerusalem. Some suspicion has been thrown on them because of the somewhat exact language in which they are expressed; and the criticism is not without reason. They do not, however, claim to give the original words of our Lord, but they are summaries of what He said written by the Evangelist. It may be quite possible that the Evangelist had allowed his language to be coloured by later events, but that would not imply that his statements with regard to our Lord's prediction were untrue; and I think if you will consider when these began, and the way in which they first began, you will see how extraordinarily rational the account is. They first come just after S. Peter's confession. Peter,

[1] Luke xxii. 37. [2] Mark x. 45.

on behalf of the disciples, recognizes Jesus as the Messiah. Is it not, then, quite natural that that should be the time when our Lord first begins to correct the erroneous expectations which the disciples had formed with regard to His Messiahship; and is not the whole incident ending with the great rebuke of S. Peter, "Get thee behind me, Satan," entirely unlikely to have been invented, or to have grown up in Christian tradition at a later date? And then almost directly afterwards comes one of the great passages in which our Lord begins to teach the Gospel of suffering. I do not think that the idea of an elaboration of this and the influence of later ideas is the least likely to be well founded.

Or let us turn to another incident, the story of the sons of Zebedee. It has been argued that the narrative is unauthentic, but it is difficult to understand the justification for such an opinion. Is it likely that a story like this, not very creditable to the Apostles, should have been invented by the early Church? We can see what attitude later times took towards it by the fact that S. Luke leaves it out, and S. Matthew follows a tradition which ascribed this overbold request to the mother of the Apostles. What writer, too, in the apostolic age would have thought of the petition: "Grant unto us that we may sit, one on thy right hand, and one on thy left in thy glory"? It is language which does correspond with the dreams and ambitions which would have been held by the half-converted Apostles, who had not yet had the experience of the Crucifixion and Resurrection. Or, again, would a writer in the apostolic age have imagined the words

"is not mine to give"? I am confident that the whole episode rings true to the Gospel narrative and the Jesus that is there depicted and the Apostles as there described. Now this narrative quite clearly implies that Jesus had that knowledge of His end which S. Mark describes, and is good reason for thinking that S. Mark's summaries give true history. Jesus has a cup to drink. He has a baptism to be baptized with. He has come as a minister and a servant, not as a lord and a conqueror. His death will be for the well-being of the world. He will die as the suffering servant, "who bore the sins of many, and made intercession for the transgressors."

And this harmonizes, too, with what He had taught. He had taught His disciples of salvation through suffering; that he who would save his life must lose it; that we must bear our cross and follow Him. Did he not realize that He Himself must fulfil what He taught His followers? Until the end, indeed, He had carefully guarded his life. He had avoided danger and imprisonment. A prophet, He had said, must not perish outside Jerusalem. He must accomplish all His work. Now He had proclaimed His message. He had chosen and trained His Apostles. The whole of the sacred land had heard the announcement of the Kingdom, and so He had gone resolutely forward to Jerusalem, carrying out His purpose to the end, but knowing that in and through His death that purpose would ultimately be accomplished.

LECTURE VI

THE RESURRECTION AND THE VIRGIN BIRTH

THE RESURRECTION AND THE VIRGIN BIRTH

Those of you who have followed my lectures up to this point may perhaps have noticed what seems to me a very significant fact in studying the life of our Lord. I have always begun with assuming that you could describe that life as if it was that of a human personality, but I think that in all cases you will find that ultimately that explanation has broken down.

Take the life of our Lord. He begins as a preacher; His career represents what might be the normal course of events in such a life; after some success people fall away from Him because His teaching represents an idea inconsistent with their expectations. We find gradually developing a new element. He continues His work, but He looks forward to His death. But He never looks forward to His death as a failure. He speaks more and more with the conviction and knowledge that the Kingdom is coming. You will find that some modern scholars begin to have difficulties about many of those traits in the latter part of our Lord's life, and so they have a tendency to eliminate them.

Take, again, His teaching. It begins as the teach-

ing of a prophet, but very soon we find in it elements which seem to imply much more. There is an element of authority. He claims to supersede the law of Moses. He teaches a higher righteousness. He claims to forgive sins. He summons men to Himself, and reveals the reality of God. He seems, too, to speak as if He knew what the history of the future was to mean. So critics eliminate this or that saying, and tell us that all these things were read by the Church into the words of our Lord.

Take the miracles. People are quite willing to accept some of them. They think they can explain them on a naturalistic basis, but they soon find that it is necessary to eliminate these events also from our Lord's life, not because the evidence is bad (it is often very good), but because they conflict with the naturalistic explanation of His life.

Take the claims that He makes for Himself. At first He preaches the Kingdom, but gradually more and more come claims that He makes, to be not only Messiah, but the Messiah as the Son of man who is to judge the world, and as one who has a close and intimate relation to the Father.

And so we find that always we reach a certain point when, if we accept the present narrative, we feel that we are describing something that transcends normal experience, and critics have either to accept that or to alter the narrative to suit presuppositions, and when they have done that, they have not explained how Christianity grew up.

We now come to two events in the history of our Lord's life, the Resurrection and the Virgin Birth, which will emphasize our argument. I am afraid I

cannot hope, in the time at my disposal, to treat either of these fully. I can only suggest to you certain lines of thought and of investigation.

I

We turn to the Resurrection. The first point I would ask you to notice is that the whole of the teaching of the Apostles and of S. Paul is based on the fact of the Resurrection. The earliest evidence is that of S. Paul, as recorded in the fifteenth chapter of the first Epistle to the Corinthians. Here we have given us, not only S. Paul's arguments for the Resurrection, but obviously the reasons for which he accepted it, and we notice too that he claims to tell us not merely what he preached himself but also what the Church taught. His teaching on the subject is, in his opinion and that of his readers, shared with the whole of the rest of the Christian Church.

Next, I would ask you to notice how he lays stress on the fact that our Lord appeared to about five hundred brethren at once, "of whom the greater part remain until now, but some are fallen asleep." That plainly implies that he was appealing to the testimony of living people, who could give first-hand evidence of the event. Moreover, it has been maintained that these appearances were subjective, meaning, I suppose by that, that they had no existence outside the minds of the observers. Such a criticism might apply to S. Paul's own vision, but the nature of the other experiences excludes such an explanation. If five hundred people simultaneously

have a similar impression, there must be an objective cause for it. Then, further, I think that S. Paul's account of the Resurrection appearances clearly implies that he had made careful enquiry. We are dealing with a man of character and ability, whose whole life had been changed and who desired to build up his teaching on a sound basis. He has thought it necessary to examine evidence and he gives the evidence. It has been maintained that he had no knowledge of the empty tomb. I do not think that that opinion is tenable. For he tells us explicitly that Jesus rose from the dead on the third day, and it was only through the tomb being empty on that day that the disciples could fix the date of the Resurrection. The mention of the third day shows that he accepts the tradition of the Christian Church.

The evidence, then, of S. Paul, the earliest written evidence we possess, presents us with the following conclusions: First, that the belief was shared by the whole Church; secondly, that it was based upon careful enquiry; thirdly, that the appearances were real; and, fourthly, that the Resurrection was on the third day, implying a knowledge of the stories of the empty tomb.

II

We now turn to the four Gospels. The first point is that all four bear witness to the empty tomb. That was the starting-point of the belief. You will find in various books attempts to explain away that story. One explanation that is given is that when

the women arrived they were amazed at not finding the tomb as they had left it, but a young man who is present explains that they have made a mistake. When he said, "He is not here," he meant, "You have come to the wrong tomb." They were confused and they thought he was telling them that He had risen. Well, I do not know whether that explanation appeals to you. It seems to me to be without reality, and would suggest to me that if such weak explanations are put forward the evidence is stronger than people are willing to admit.

Then, again, another and different school of writers have felt that the evidence for the empty tomb is so strong that they have resuscitated the idea that our Lord was not really dead. That, again, seems to me to corroborate the Christian belief. Certainly the belief in the empty tomb was early. Why did the Church so soon give up keeping the Sabbath and substitute the first day of the week, and call it the Lord's Day? Surely the reason was that on that day the empty tomb was discovered and this was the beginning of the Christian belief.

A good deal is made sometimes about the difficulty of harmonizing the Gospel narrative. That is not one on which people lay stress at the present time, because many of those who take a critical attitude are prepared to believe in the reality in some way or another of the Resurrection appearances. Quite clearly the Gospel narratives represent to us the convinced belief that our Lord had appeared after His death to His disciples, but when you try to construct a continuous or complete narrative of events after the Resurrection, you will find there is

considerable difficulty. But this is not a difficulty which is confined to these narratives. It is equally difficult to reconstruct any part of our Lord's life in detail, nor is it a difficulty which is confined to sacred history. We most of us read our history in textbooks which contain the conventional reconstruction, but if you set aside textbooks and go back to the sources, if you take the chroniclers and other books out of which our history is made up, you will find that it is only possible to construct a coherent and connected narrative by what we call harmonizing, by fitting the different narratives one into another, by recognizing that no one of them is quite accurate, by balancing the evidence, and by building up, as well as we can, a connected series of events. Suppose you take an event like the Battle of Waterloo or the Battle of Jutland. You will find it extraordinarily difficult to get a coherent and complete account, and it appears to become more difficult the greater the number of eye-witnesses you can consult. Not only are people inaccurate, but each person has seen one particular part, and his conception of the whole is necessarily imperfect. Supposing all the narratives of the Resurrection in the four Gospels and in S. Paul exactly harmonized, you would at once think that they came from a single source and had no independent value. It is because you have five different summaries coming from different sources that you have a strong conviction of the fundamental truth of what underlies all the different narratives. We have three facts to go upon. First, the fundamental belief in the Resurrection; secondly, the fact of the empty tomb; and, thirdly, a considerable

number of narratives bearing witness to the fact that the disciples had seen the risen Lord.

I now come to a point of great importance, which I wish to put before you. Why is it that we are certain that the events of history, as we are acquainted with them, are on the whole true, although there is no demonstrative evidence for any particular fact or event? It is this: by historical investigation we have been able to build up a consistent and satisfactory account of history as a whole, so that each separate event takes its place in a series of events as an essential part of it. Dr. Whately, who was Archbishop of Dublin and famous as a brilliant logician, once wrote a convincing demonstration that on the evidence before him the Battle of Waterloo could not have happened. He criticized the evidence for the battle in the way that people are sometimes inclined to criticize the evidence for some past event. But suppose that we had no evidence at all; suppose that every account of that battle had been lost, we should know that something of the sort had happened, because of the subsequent history of Europe. The whole history of the events that followed depended on a series of events preceding, which culminated in the Battle of Waterloo.

Now with regard to the Resurrection, that is just what we can say is true. Something happened which entirely changed the character and attitude of the disciples. The arrest and death of our Lord seems at first too much for their faith. "All the disciples forsook Him and fled." They were overcome with the sense of failure and defeat, but

something happened which transformed all their thoughts and made them enthusiastic preachers of the living Christ. What was the cause of this change? It was the fact that they had seen the risen Lord. They knew that He lived. Something had happened which had power to change those Galilean peasants into fearless evangelists of the Gospel. I do not think, if you take away the Resurrection, you can account for the preaching of the Gospel and the transformation which took place in the disciples after the Crucifixion. They believed because they were firmly convinced that they had seen the risen Lord.

III

It is not, of course, possible for me to discuss all the various theories which have been put forward to explain away the Resurrection or the criticisms on the narrative. What I think is important is the immense variety, a variety which suggests how unsatisfactory most of these criticisms and explanations are to everyone except to their inventors. You will remember that Professor Harnack, in his book, *What is Christianity?* tries to make a distinction between the Easter message and the Easter faith.

"The Easter message," he says, "tells us of that wonderful event in Joseph of Arimathæa's garden, which, however, no eye saw; it tells us of the empty grave into which a few women and disciples looked; of the appearance of the Lord in a transfigured form—so glorified that his own could not immediately recognize Him; it soon begins to tell us, too, of what the

risen one said and did. The reports became more and more complete, and more and more confident. But the Easter faith is the conviction that the crucified one gained a victory over death; that God is just and powerful; that He who is the first-born among many brethren still lives. Paul based his Easter faith upon the certainty that 'the second Adam' was from heaven, and upon his experience, on the way to Damascus, of God revealing His Son to him as still alive."

You have to accept, in fact, the Easter faith which tells you that Jesus lives, but you have to put on one side the narrative on which it is based. But what evidence have we for the Easter faith apart from the Easter message? Without the empty grave and the appearance of Jesus the Church could not possibly have attained the conviction that death had been vanquished. No doubt personal experience helped, but there must have been actual evidence as well. S. Paul believed not merely because of his own experience on the road to Damascus, but also because of the testimony of others. Our theological position is based upon a belief in a historical fact. The evidence for that fact seems to me to be as strong as the evidence for any event in ancient history. The real difficulty that people find at the present time about belief in our Lord's Resurrection and about belief in the empty tomb does not really lie in the character of the evidence, it lies in a certain *a priori* point of view.

Let me take another criticism which will illustrate this point.

"The disappearance or absolute annihilation, the

reanimation or the sudden transformation into something not quite material and yet not quite spiritual, of a really dead body, would involve the violation of the best ascertained laws of physics, chemistry, and physiology. Were the testimony fifty times stronger than it is, any hypothesis would be more possible than that. But in the present state of our knowledge of the kind of causality which is discovered in the relation between mind and mind, or between mind and body, there is nothing to be said against the possibility of an appearance of Christ to his disciples, which was a real, though supernormal, psychological event, but which involved nothing which can properly be spoken of as a suspension of natural law."

The point is this. The Resurrection of Jesus in any form and the empty tomb would be contrary to scientific law. Visions or psychical appearances would not be contrary to such law, and therefore may have happened. Now that statement seems to me to contain a fundamental inconsistency. If there were any naturalistic theory of the universe which could make a miracle impossible, it would be just as difficult for a supernormal psychological appearance to take place as for any other miracle. People make a great deal of juggling with words. They will accept what is supernormal, but they will not accept what is supernatural, and then they make a further distinction between supernatural and unnatural ; but I do not think that any of these distinctions will hold. Either the world is subject to the sway of fixed and rigid laws, in which case no miracle is possible, nor is it possible for God to reveal Himself to mankind, to

become incarnate, and to show by visible signs that He has risen from the dead; or these laws represent merely our knowledge of God's actions in the world, in which case their violation, however improbable or contrary to experience, would not be impossible. We have evidence, as I believe strong evidence, for certain events. If we have sufficient grounds for believing in them, the truth of Christianity follows, but we cannot play fast and loose with the evidence, and clearly the reason we are asked to do so is, not that the evidence is not good, but that there are *a priori* reasons alleged against accepting it, reasons that assume a naturalistic theory of the world. But if the world is governed by spiritual forces, if those spiritual forces were incarnate in Jesus Christ, there would be no reason why He should not be able to supersede the normal laws of the corruption of the body, why some event should not take place which might bear witness to the reality of His Resurrection and create that body of evidence which enabled the disciples to preach the Gospel and found the Church. To my mind the combination of strong and good evidence with the series of events which followed the Resurrection may reasonably bring conviction to our minds.

IV

I come now to speak of the Virgin Birth. As regards this there is a marked contrast between the evidence for it and the evidence for the Resurrection. The evidence for the Resurrection is, as I have tried to show, strong. The evidence for the Virgin Birth

is slight. While the Resurrection was put forward from the beginning as the grounds for our belief in our Lord, the Virgin Birth was only accepted as part of the Christian teaching. It is never given as a proof. In the nature of things it was something for which there could not be evidence of the same demonstrative character. Those who accepted did so, not on the grounds of the evidence, but because it is harmonious with the general teaching of the Gospel. What I propose to show is, first, that there is sufficient evidence that it was an early belief of the Christian Church; and, secondly, that it harmonizes with the Biblical conception of our Lord.

The evidence is based upon two narratives of the birth, one in S. Matthew's Gospel and one in S. Luke's. Various attempts have been made to overthrow these narratives on the ground of certain variations in the text. In any case, as far as I can see, the evidence in favour of the variations is not sufficient. But even if it were so, it would not affect the question, for it is quite clear that the narratives alike in both Gospels imply throughout a belief in the supernatural character of our Lord's birth.[1]

[1] I notice that Dr. Streeter, in his book on *The Four Gospels*, admits that the narrative in S. Matthew's Gospel implies the belief in a supernatural birth, and that the variations in the text on which stress has been laid may be dismissed as from this point of view unimportant. But he still lays stress on the variations of reading in S. Luke. In one old Latin MS., Luke i. 34, "How shall this be, seeing I know not a man?" is omitted, and the words in verse 38 are transferred here, "Behold the handmaid of the Lord: be it unto me according to thy word." I do not think that it is possible to look upon this as the original reading. If it were so the words of the angel, verses 35-37, would be meaningless. They are clearly intended to account for and justify a strange and unusual event, and imply the supernatural character of the birth.

Now the point to notice about these two narratives is that they are clearly derived from different sources. They show no evidence of having been influenced by one another. They both imply a belief in the story of the Virgin Birth. That story, then, which is common to these two series of narratives, must be older than either of them. If you look at modern commentaries upon the stories, you will see that it is suggested that some of them, at any rate, are Midrashic in character—that is, they are stories which have grown up to illustrate teaching. Many would doubt whether the story of the Magi or of the Massacre of the Innocents was actually true. But the point is this: the belief in the Virgin Birth was older than those stories, and it is a belief such as this which has caused the growth of the Midrashic element. If stories arose to illustrate or explain teaching, the teaching must have been older than the stories.

Some stress has been laid upon the argument against the Virgin Birth from silence. I think if you will consider for a moment, you will see that this does not take us very far. To begin with the Acts of the Apostles, we know that it was written by the same person as the third Gospel, almost certainly by S. Luke, and we know that it was written after that Gospel. It is quite certain, therefore, that the writer of the Acts of the Apostles knew of the Virgin Birth and accepted it, though he makes no reference to it. That will impress upon you the weakness of the argument from silence. He records the Virgin Birth in the Gospel because it was relevant to his purpose; he omits it

in the Acts because it was not relevant. Quite clearly it was not part of the ordinary apostolic teaching.

If you turn to the Gospels of S. Mark and S. John, you must remember that in both cases they profess to record facts of which the author could give the evidence of an eye-witness. The common Synoptic narrative, which is contained in S. Mark, was based upon the actual testimony of the Apostles, which extended from the baptism of John to the Ascension. To what happened besides that the disciples could not bear witness. And the same is true of S. John. He claims to be an eye-witness, or to give the record of an eye-witness. In neither case would it have been consistent with the plan of the writers to give a story of which neither they nor their informants had personal evidence.

V

I have said that what I desired to show was that this was part of the early Christian teaching. For that fact we have a rather interesting source of evidence, which seems to me to have some weight. We have considerable fragments preserved to us of an attack upon Christianity written by a certain Celsus, a philosopher of the middle of the second century. He, among other things, gives us an account of Jewish traditions with regard to our Lord. Our knowledge of the book comes from the quotations made from it by Origen and his criticism of it. This is the story that Celsus gives us of the birth of our Lord.

"After these things," says Origen, "Celsus intro-

duces a Jew . . . disputing with Jesus, and confuting Him, as he thinks, on many points; and in the first place, he accuses Him of having 'invented his birth from a virgin,' and upbraids Him with being 'born in a certain Jewish village of a poor woman of the country, who worked with her hands.' He says that she had been turned out of his house by her husband, a carpenter by trade, having been convicted of adultery. Then he says that she, having been thus cast out by her husband, and wandering about in disgrace, brought forth Jesus in secret, an illegitimate child, who, having hired Himself out as a servant in Egypt on account of His poverty, and having there acquired some miraculous powers, on which the Egyptians greatly pride themselves, returned to His own country highly elated on account of them, and by means of these proclaimed Himself a God."[1]

Later on he returns to the same subject.

"But let us now return to where the Jew is introduced, speaking of the mother of Jesus, and saying that 'when she was pregnant she was turned out of doors by the carpenter to whom she had been betrothed, as having been guilty of adultery, and that she bore a child to a certain soldier named Panthera'; and let us see whether those who have blindly concocted these fables about the adultery of the virgin with Panthera, and her rejection by the carpenter, did not invent these stories to overturn His miraculous conception by the Holy Ghost; for they could have falsified the history in a different manner, on account of its extremely miraculous

[1] Origen, *Contra Celsum*, i. 28.

character, and not have admitted, as it were against their will, that Jesus was born of no ordinary human marriage. It was to be expected, indeed, that those who would not believe the miraculous birth of Jesus would invent some falsehood."[1]

These extracts prove that there was a Jewish story which stated that our Lord's father was a soldier named Panthera. The word *panthera* is clearly an anagram or corruption of the word *parthenos*, and it seems to me that the fact that quite early the Jews were spreading discreditable stories about our Lord's mother implies that the Virgin Birth was an early part of the Christian tradition. Clearly these stories had arisen to account for something which was part of the earliest Christian teaching, and I have always thought we might find a reference to them in the statement that the Jews made in S. John's Gospel: "We are not born of fornication; we have Abraham for our Father."

If we turn to Christian tradition, we find from the beginning that the Virgin Birth was part of the teaching of the Church. Ignatius, in his *Epistle to the Ephesians*, says: "Hidden from the prince of this world was the virginity of Mary." And in the *Apology* of Aristides we find the following: "Christians trace their descent to Jesus Christ, who is professed to have been born of a pure virgin"; while in Justin Martyr, writing about 150, there is full reference to it. Both traditional teaching and the Jewish attacks on Christianity show quite clearly that this belief was part of the earliest teaching of the Church.

[1] *Ibid.* i 32.

VI

Various attempts have been made to explain it away by suggesting that it came into Christianity from outside. Analogies have been found in similar stories in the Buddhist scriptures. As far as I can gather, those stories are not part of the early tradition of Buddhism, but belong to the later tradition, which itself was influenced by Christianity. Then, again, analogies have been found with classical stories, but I think that one thing is quite clear, if you read the story in S. Matthew, that that is quite definitely Jewish in character, and shows no trace at all of Hellenic influence.

Then, again, it has been suggested that the story grew up in order to explain the fulfilment of prophecy. In S. Matthew's Gospel you will find a series of events recorded, and in connection with all of them passages from the Old Testament are quoted which they are supposed to fulfil. Modern critics, on the other hand, would suggest that the stories grew up in order to provide fulfilment of prophecy. But if you will examine the texts which are supposed to be fulfilled you will find little in them that would be likely to suggest the narrative. Take, for example, the flight into Egypt. It is said to have been suggested by the words in Hosea, "Out of Egypt have I called my son"; but when you turn to the passage in Hosea, you find that that passage refers not to Christ, but to Israel, and is to be explained by the Exodus.

Now it would be quite natural with the methods of exegesis which prevailed at the time for a Chris-

tian, searching the Scriptures, to find in these words a prophecy of our Lord's flight into Egypt, but the words could hardly have suggested the story. It is hardly likely that the story would have been created in order to fulfil a prophecy which could not, *prima facie*, refer to the Messiah.

Take, again, the story of the Magi. Supposing that had been invented merely to find a fulfilment of prophecy, care would have been taken to make it harmonize. It is supposed to represent the fulfilment of the words, "The Gentiles shall come to thy light and kings to the brightness of thy rising." Now the Magi are always called kings in mediæval tradition, simply to represent the fulfilment of prophecy, but they are never called kings in the Gospel. The mediæval stories show us what the narrative in the Gospels would have been had it been invented to show how Messianic prophecy had been fulfilled.

Or take again the words about Rachel weeping for her children. They did not refer to Bethlehem in the original, and they clearly have some reference to events known to the prophet. But Rachel's tomb was believed to be at Bethlehem, so it was quite natural, knowing the story of the Massacre of the Innocents, to find in it a fulfilment of this prophecy. But would it be likely that so far-fetched an allusion would have been the basis of the origin of the narrative?

It is, I think, just the same with regard to the well-known passage, Isa. vii. 14: "Behold, a virgin shall conceive," for in the original the words which are translated "virgin" merely mean "young woman." It is difficult to believe that the story of

the miraculous birth was invented to produce a fulfilment of a prophecy which, in the original Hebrew, did not speak of a Virgin Birth at all. It is not strange, however, that after such an event had occurred, prophecy for it should be discovered. All these forced interpretations really show that at the time of Christ's coming people desired to find proof, not only of His Messianic office, but of every event recorded in the Gospel. I do not think that it is at all probable that a number of events should have been invented or imagined in order to fulfil passages of Scripture that have no obviously Messianic bearing. On the other hand, if the event really occurred, it would be quite natural to find some reference in the Old Testament, even in passages divorced from their context.

I think, then, that the evidence shows that the story of the Virgin Birth was part of the early teaching of Christianity, and that it is not in the least likely that it rose up either from outside influence or from the attempt to find a fulfilment of prophecy.

VII

I now come to the question, Is it congruous with Christian belief? Here, again, I do not think you should overstate the case as some are inclined to do. You cannot say that our Lord must have been born in this way. You cannot tell on *a priori* grounds how a thing ought to happen, but I think you can feel that the story takes its natural place in Christian theology. It emphasizes the way in which the Incarnation is a new departure in the history of

mankind. Our Lord represented human nature, so Christian theology asserts, in a form hitherto not deemed possible. He took upon Him human nature but without the taint of sin. More than that the Incarnation was a new departure in the history of mankind. If it is really true, that is what it must be. It is, therefore, quite in harmony with the purpose and meaning of Christ's coming into the world that He should have done so in a way different from other men. A supernatural birth harmonizes with His supernatural mission. I notice that this argument has been put with very considerable weight in an interesting book, published not many years ago, *Evolution and the Doctrine of the Trinity.* The author of that book argues that if our Lord's life was intended to be a new departure in the history of the human race, then a birth different from the ordinary human birth would be natural, and writing as he does as a man of scientific knowledge, his opinion is of weight in the matter.[1]

We can further appeal to the universal Christian

[1] *Evolution and the Doctrine of the Trinity,* by Stewart A. McDowall, B.D., Cambridge, 1918, p. 133. "No doubt it is true that the whole matter is a mystery which we cannot solve. But it does, at least, seem congruous that the Divine nature of Christ should have been emphasized, and that the break with the tradition of disability should have been symbolized by a miraculous and Divine generation, in which the Human and Divine aspects are visible equally. Whether the Virgin Birth was a fact or a pious interpretation is an altogether different problem, which can, I think, only be solved on the grounds of historical evidence. But of its congruity there can be no question. The birth of Christ must in some sense have been miraculous if He was God and if there is any truth in our contention that Original Sin, even in the sense of inherited disability, is a real thing. The Virgin Birth seems to emphasize this truth, and point to the miracle, in a way which lays stress on just the points that need stress."

consciousness which has always felt that the picture of the mother and child, the purity of the virgin, the sacrifice of motherhood, are appropriate to the scheme of Christian doctrine. The Virgin Birth, then, takes its place as a natural part of Christian doctrine, as representing a new departure in the human race, as harmonizing with our conception of the sinlessness of Jesus, and as having created the Christian ideal of motherhood.

To sum up, then, the evidence for the Virgin Birth is slight in quantity, but it takes us back to an early stage in Christian teaching. There is little or no evidence against it. The evidence would not be strong enough to justify our belief in it if it were an isolated event apart from the rest of the Gospel narrative. But if we have convinced ourselves of the truth of the Resurrection, of the Divine character of our Lord's teaching, of the more than human character of his life, then the further account of his birth harmonizes with that, and the whole presents itself to us as a record supernatural, unnatural, if you look at the world from the naturalistic point of view, but not unnatural if you look at the world from the point of view of the doctrine of the Incarnation, from the point of view of the whole Christian scheme. The strongest evidence in favour of a teaching or of a system of thought is that it is coherent. The whole record of our Lord in the Gospels, from His birth to His resurrection, is a coherent scheme, and therefore each particular part helps in the credibility of the whole. While there is evidence sometimes strong, sometimes less strong, for each particular element in that picture taken

separately, the evidence for the whole becomes much stronger, because it is based on the general congruity of the picture.

Looking, then, at these two narratives from the point of view with which we started on our investigation, they harmonize with the results attained in each separate line of investigation. I have suggested it to you that if you follow the Gospel narrative, there always comes a point when the purely naturalistic account breaks down. If you wish to explain the life of Jesus as that of an ordinary man, you have in every case to omit what seems a harmonious part of the narrative. The same conclusion is brought home to us by these two narratives. They harmonize with the conception of the Gospels to which we have been gradually led. They must be explained away if that conception is not true.

In our next lecture we shall have to approach the problem from a wider point of view.

LECTURE VII

"WHAT THINK YE OF CHRIST? WHOSE SON IS HE?"

"WHAT THINK YE OF CHRIST? WHOSE SON IS HE?"

I AM now going to ask you to approach with me the fundamental question to which our previous investigations have been leading up. Let me try, in the first place, to sum up what I believe that we have already attained.

We started by studying the evidence for the life of Christ, and I gave you reasons, external and internal, which seemed to me to suggest that the history contained in the three Synoptic Gospels, and to a certain extent in that of S. John, was good. We then studied the life of our Lord, treating it as a life of one who lived at the time when the events recorded are believed to have happened, and I suggested reasons to you for thinking that out of the material with which we are provided, we were able to construct a coherent and intelligent account of the life of our Lord, that it was historical in its character, and harmonized with the historical surroundings in which it was supposed to have been acted. We did not discuss the miraculous side, but arrived at the conclusion that there was good evidence for the life of our Lord as it is recorded. From the life we passed to the teaching, and here, again, I suggested to you that this teaching was a

coherent whole; that it harmonized with the intellectual surroundings of the time; that while containing nothing that was anachronistic, nothing which could not have been spoken when our Lord lived, it yet was in the highest degree original, and that it put before us certain great fundamental, religious, and ethical principles which, though growing out of and derived from the Old Testament, could not have been collected from it. We then passed to the Personality of Jesus, as depicted for us in the Gospels. We found presented to us a life of great spiritual beauty and power. In a particular way Jesus taught with authority. Above all, there was evidence of spiritual power in beneficent works. If we laid aside all *a priori* arguments for or against them, the miracles were interwoven with the whole life of Jesus; the evidence for them was as good as for the other incidents. There was nothing, or hardly anything, thaumaturgic about them; they were remarkable for their ethical value as well as for the beneficence that they displayed; they gave evidence of a remarkable spiritual personality. We studied further the claims that Jesus made. We found that He clearly throughout His life looked upon Himself as the Messiah and as fulfilling, therefore, all Jewish expectations, and in His words and works He claimed a special and peculiar relation to the Father. We then studied the death of Christ, both in its incidents and in its theological meaning, and we found that that death harmonized with some of the most profound teaching of Jesus. Human life He had represented as in a special way a gift of love, exhibited in sacrifice, and what He

taught His own death revealed. We then passed to the study of the stories of the Resurrection and the Birth. We found the evidence for the Resurrection not only in the incidents recorded, but in the profound transformation which took place in the lives and outlook of the disciples. Something clearly had happened which changed the timid and doubting followers who had fled when our Lord was arrested into those Apostles who went forth and preached the Gospel throughout the world. The evidence for the miraculous Birth was not, as in fact it could not be, of the same strength. It could not be used as of evidential value; our belief in it must depend upon the ultimate judgment we form as to the meaning and significance of the life of Christ.

I

This represents the point we have reached. We have now to ask the question, what interpretation we can give to these remarkable facts. Let us study first the interpretation of the apostolic age. We have a considerable body of writing dating from the first and second generation of Christian teachers; in particular, the letters of the Apostle Paul; and as to the genuineness of the more important of these there is not any reasonable doubt. From them and from other writings we can with some probability construct a picture of the primitive teaching of the Christian Church and of its development till the close of the apostolic age.

Now what was the testimony of the Apostles and of the apostolic age? Many of the preachers

of Christianity had known Jesus in the flesh; they were all in contact with those who had so known Him. They had to guide them three great facts. They had, first of all, the records which were preserved of His life and death. They had, secondly, the fact of His resurrection; and then, thirdly, to interpret these, they had the religious expectations and hopes of the Old Testament. Now what was the interpretation that they made? In the first place, they quite clearly and definitely thought of Jesus as the Christ, the Messiah whom the Jews expected, and in thus thinking they had entirely eliminated any idea of the Messiah as a conqueror, although probably they had not eliminated the conception of the apocalyptic Messiah. They thought that Jesus who had ascended to the Father would shortly come to bring an end to the troubles of His people. In this relationship we find three titles used which have considerable significance.

He is called "The servant of God," παῖς Θεοῦ. This title connected Him with a side of Jewish expectation which had not previously been associated with the Messianic idea, and in doing that inevitably brought to bear upon the interpretation of His life all that we are told in the second part of Isaiah about the "suffering servant." This assisted the Christian Church to understand what was a real difficulty. How could you account for the death of Christ? If we study the earliest preaching of S. Peter we find that he proves the Messiahship of Christ by the resurrection in spite of the difficulties of the Crucifixion. It was only gradually that the

full significance of the death of Christ became clear to them. At first they recognized it as part of the Divine purpose; ultimately they realized that Christ died for our sins, according to the Scriptures.

Then, secondly, they thought of our Lord as "The Son of God," ὁ υἱος τοῦ θεοῦ. The use of this term is very common in S. Paul's writings, and we are told specifically in the Acts of the Apostles that S. Paul preached Christ as the Son of God. It has been held by some that this meant that he was the first to give that title to our Lord. That is not a necessary interpretation of the words, and it does not seem to me to be possible, for in the New Testament Christ represents Himself as the Son.

Then, thirdly, they gave Him the title of "Lord." This phrase came to have considerable significance. In its origin it came from the Old Testament. It is occasionally found in the Gospels, though it is not very common; but it must have been used very early in the Church, for the expression *Maranatha* (the Lord is at hand) dates back to Aramaic times. But there is no doubt that it came to have, as scholars have recently pointed out, a greater significance. Whilst the term "Christ" had no meaning for the Gentile world, the term "Lord" was used quite definitely of heathen gods, in particular of a saviour god of the popular religious mysteries, and therefore it became more and more the title to be used in relation to the heathen world, and it would have fuller significance for that world than other names. It is interesting and remarkable that we do not find the expression "Son of man" used, except in one place, in the apostolic literature, and it is difficult,

under those circumstances, to believe, as some have suggested, that it was a phrase not used by our Lord of Himself and only used of Him by the early Church.

All these expectations and names go back to a very early time in the Apostolic Church. As time went on, new strains of thought began to develop. In the Book of Wisdom the author has spoken of the Divine wisdom in a series of phrases essentially Greek in character. It is clear on other grounds that the book was one with which St. Paul was well acquainted, and he makes use of all these phrases in his description of the dignity of Jesus in the Epistle to the Colossians. Then from another important source there came another line of language. The author of the Epistle to the Hebrews—whoever he may have been—had clearly been brought up in the Hellenic-Jewish philosophy of the time, and he first, so far as we know, uses the language of "appearance and reality" in relation to the person of Christ. While all other religious manifestations had belonged only to the realm of appearance, had been copies of the Divine reality, Jesus Himself represented reality. How important and how significant the use of this language was will be seen as we proceed with our investigation.

And then, lastly, at the end of the Apostolic period we find an expression used—"the Word"—which had, perhaps, a double origin. There were sources for it in the Old Testament; it was used, perhaps, in the rabbinical schools of the day, but it was also a word which the Jewish philosopher Philo had derived from Greek philosophy. From what-

ever source it came to the fourth Gospel, its significance was great because the most important term of all current philosophy was used to express the conception that the Church had formed of the life and person of Christ.

These, stated very broadly, were the different lines of teaching in the apostolic age. If we pass from the formal expression to the religious teaching behind it we shall find that throughout a lofty conception has been formed of the person and work of Christ. I do not think that I need trouble you in detail with this to-day. You have no doubt analyzed it for yourself, and you realize, whether you look at Christ from the point of view of atonement—He is the Saviour from whom salvation comes—or from the point of view of revelation, it is He who has made known to man the realities of the Divine nature; from either point of view you realize that a lofty conception of His person is obviously implied.

Now the problem which this teaching, which we have summarized so shortly, raises is this: Are we to consider that the conception of Christ's person was one which was gradually built up from the coming together of many different strains of thought, or are we to think that these various expressions and phrases were used to explain a belief which already existed? Those are the two points of view from which the New Testament theology can be studied. It is possible for those to whom such methods of investigation appeal to suggest that the conception which the Christian Church has formed of Christ's person is really a syncretistic growth.

There was an Old Testament expectation of a Messiah, there was an apocalyptic Son of God, there was a Saviour God of the Greek mysteries, there was the Divine Word of Philo, there was the Divine wisdom of the Wisdom literature. In a sort of unconscious way all these different elements coalesced in people's minds, and so they created the beautiful, if unhistorical, ideal of Jesus Christ as the Saviour, the Word, and the Son of God; but they did not do this because they had inherited a belief which justified it, but because gradually they ascribed new attributes to one who had been on earth a Master whose memory they reverenced. That is one point of view. The other point of view will say that from the beginning it was felt that Jesus was the Messiah. He had said so; He had led them to think what He was by His action; His words and teaching had justified it; His works were the works of the Messiah. He had spoken again of an intimate relation between Himself and the Father, and therefore, although to call Him Divine had not been what the disciples originally learnt, yet they had believed in Him as Divine before they developed their theology, and they used all the language of the Old Testament and of contemporary thought as it became known to them to bring out a conception which was implicit in those actions and words of Jesus that they remembered. Those are the two points of view from which this apostolic teaching has been interpreted.

II

And now let us pass on to the development of Christian theology—that is to say, to ask what the Christian Church has learnt to think about Jesus; and again, of course, all that I desire to do is to draw your attention to certain great principles involved. I am not concerned with the details.

If anyone studies the history of Christian theology with care, the first thing that will be apparent to him is that the aim of the Church was to explain the teaching of Scripture. The appeal always was to Scripture, and ultimately developments were condemned as unsound which were not derived from, or did not seem to respond to the real teaching of Scripture. This had an important result. It was obvious and clear that whatever else Jesus Christ was, He was represented as in complete reality human, and therefore whatever tendency there may have been to exalt the Divine Nature of Christ, the Christian Church always guarded carefully the Humanity. Then, next, the Christian Church always tried to explain their religion in terms of the philosophy of the day. They used the language of current philosophy to give a meaning to the person of Christ, and in Christian development the point we have to remember is that the religious teaching is always in close touch with the philosophic teaching of the time. This remained true certainly for the first four centuries. In the fifth century the alienation between culture and religion begins to develop, and finally, with the condemnation and banishment of the philosophers, the more intellectual side of Christian development

was for a time lost. The history of the development of Christian theology is the attempt to explain and define the inherited Christian thought in the language of the philosophy of the day.

Let me now sum up the main points of this development. In the second century the Christian Church had to justify its teaching in the language of the current philosophy. I have already pointed out to you what an immense gain to it the use of the expression "the Word" was. Here enshrined in a Book which was recognized as canonical was an expression which connected the person of our Lord with all the philosophical speculation of the time. "The Word," "The Divine Logos," was the expression used by current thought to explain the relation of God to the world, and all through the second century the conception of Christ from the cosmological point of view was the most prominent, and we find this expression in the earlier Creeds. It is significant how, gradually, as the religious side of Christianity overpowered the philosophical, this phrase largely passed out of use. While the theology of the second and third centuries is a Logos theology, the theology of Athanasius is based on the expression "Son of God," on the Atonement, and the religious significance of the life of Christ.

Then, secondly, the explanation of Christ's Person is connected with the idea of reality. I need not remind you of the fundamental Platonic idea which runs through all this speculation. Plato, in summing up and explaining the speculations of Greek philosophy, had found reality in those ideas which preceded and accounted for the changing phenomena of

life. This world of reality was the world of *ousia*, of being, and the fundamental question for the Christian Church was this: Was the *ousia*, the essence, the being of Jesus Divine in character? And the Christian Church ultimately decided in favour of the reality of the Divine nature of Jesus.

But there were a host of other questions which arose. A fundamental tenet of Judaism and of Christianity was the unity of the Godhead. When once the Divine Nature of the Son had become recognized the problem presented itself as to how the Divinity of Jesus could be consistent with the Divine unity, and inevitably there was developed the Christian doctrine of the Trinity. Then came the further questions of the reality of Christ's Humanity. It was very tempting, especially to those who looked upon the difference between human and Divine as something fundamental, to develop theories which practically took away the reality of the human nature of Christ, but to the Christian Church this was always felt to be impossible, for were not the records of the New Testament there, presenting the Humanity of Christ in all its aspects? Did not the Humanity of Christ appeal to the religious sense? How could Christ really have redeemed human nature if He had not really shared human nature and human life? And then came further difficulties. If Christ was divine and if Christ was human, where did the unity lie? Were there two Christs? Was there a man Christ and a Divine Christ? And so gradually, as the result of nearly five centuries of thought, there was worked out the traditional Christology. Jesus of Nazareth was the

Messiah, the Son of God. As Son of God, not merely by adoption, but in reality, He was Himself Very God. He, the Son of God, Himself united with the Godhead in a Divine Unity, took to Himself human nature and became man and lived and died on earth for mankind, thus revealing God to man and thus revealing human nature in its highest possibilities.

That, then, was the result of these centuries of Christian thought, and the question that we are asked at the present day is whether this is really true. Was this merely a superstructure gradually built up out of the current philosophies and thought of the time, or is it a true interpretation of the nature and significance of the life of Christ? Let us try and put it in more modern language. In Jesus we have the revelation of reality. If God is the fundamental fact of the world and the world owes its existence to God, then it is true, as S. John says, that no man has seen God at any time, that man cannot have a real knowledge of God, and therefore Jesus Christ, the Son of God, revealed God to mankind. He revealed to us the true nature of God as Righteousness, Love, and Sacrifice, and thus revealed to us also the destiny and purpose of mankind. Have we, then, in Jesus Christ a real revelation of reality? That is the question we have to discuss.

III

We have now to ask whether there are any arguments by which we may test the truth of this conception of the Christian Revelation. I will begin first with the relation of it to the religion of the Old

Testament. If we study the history of the religion of Israel, particularly if we do so from the newest critical standpoint, we find a gradual development of the conception of the idea of God. The people of Israel were distinguished from the surrounding nations and from, in fact, all the nations of antiquity by a unique conception of what God means. They believed in one God. At first this belief was what is often now called henotheistic; it might be difficult to distinguish it from the form of belief in the surrounding nations. If Chemosh was the God of Moab and Moloch of Ammon, so Jehovah was the God of Israel, and no doubt originally the people of Israel thought of God much as their heathen neighbours did. But from the beginning there is a distinction, and, as the history of Israel progresses, this distinction becomes more marked. Gradually, largely through the teaching of the prophets, the people of Israel learnt to look upon Jehovah, the God of Israel, as Jehovah, the God of the whole earth. Originally their conceptions were anthropomorphic; gradually more and more they learnt to look upon Him as enthroned in Heaven and to distinguish Him from the imperfect conceptions of the surrounding nations. While they were all idolatrous, from the very beginning the worship of Jehovah seems to have been aniconic, and so the way was prepared for a real spiritual conception.

Then, secondly, the people of Israel believed in a righteous God. To us that seems as much a commonplace as a belief in one God, but neither of these views is the belief of primitive peoples. The gods of all the surrounding nations were

the gods of nature-worship. They represented not an ideal, but the embodiment in divine form of the natural instincts of mankind. From the beginning, to a certain extent, more so as time advanced, the conception of Jehovah was that of a righteous God, and the religion of Israel was accompanied by a standard of morality which grew more and more elevated. Whatever defects we may find in the moral attitude of the Jews compared with their later standard, if we contrast it with that of the surrounding nations we find a moral outlook entirely different. While the religions of Moab and Ammon, of Tyre and Sidon, as of Babylon, consecrated human lust, the religion of Israel condemned all such developments. It may be that there was originally a time when the Jews were like the surrounding nations, when they worshipped Jehovah as the surrounding nations worshipped their gods; that may be so, though I do not think there is much evidence for it, but in that case how completely their religious and ethical ideal had been transformed!

Then, thirdly, the people of Israel believed that they were in a particular degree chosen by God not only for His service but also for the service of the nations of the world, and this idea we find just at a time when we might expect all such ambitions to be dead. When their independence as a nation had been destroyed, when the line of their kings had come to an end, when it might have been argued that Jehovah had failed by allowing them to be taken into captivity, we find their conceptions both of the Divine nature and of the functions of Israel

continually being developed in relation to a wider world. No doubt the views were imperfect; no doubt there were some who thought that the sharing in the Messianic Kingdom by the Gentiles meant their subjection to Israel, but the point is that this most exclusive of all nations looked upon their religion as "a light to lighten the Gentiles."

Then, fourthly, we find these ambitions and ideals associated with a definite figure. In its earlier days the conception of the Messiah was no doubt vague and unformed. Only gradually was it developed, but long before the coming of Jesus there was a clear expectation among the Jews that one would come who would restore the kingdom of David, who would rule His people in righteousness, through whom the Jew would triumph over the nations of the ancient world, and who would build up the true theocracy. What were thought to be the characteristics of this Messiah we cannot universally affirm. There were different bodies of Israelites who had different ideals, but the fact remains that there was an extraordinary belief in the coming of one who would be in a special way the Messiah, the Son of God, under whom the reign of God would be established in the world, and under whom righteousness would begin to assert itself.

We turn now to the New Testament and we find all these expectations and hopes fulfilled in the person of one who transcended even what the highest minds of the ancient world had expected Now what is the cause or meaning of this connection? It may be argued that the prophecies produced their own fulfilment. I hardly think that

that is possible, for they were always fulfilled in a far more lofty way than any had hoped or expected —in fact, many of those who particularly looked forward to the Messiah were very much in doubt whether Christ was He. It is indeed difficult to establish the thesis that the religion of the Old Testament made its fulfilment natural, but when we find a long and purposeful process going on from century to century, are we not justified in being prepared to see design and purpose in this process? Here, at any rate, we have a definite looking forward to the coming of the Messiah; we have one coming who claims to fulfil these expectations, but does so in a way which far transcends anything which people had hoped, for He makes His fulfilment spiritual and not material, and builds up a Kingdom far more powerful than anything which Jewish imagination had conceived. Does not a process like this make us wonder if there is not a purpose behind these parts? Can we explain them merely on some theory of the survival of the fittest?

IV

The next point on which I would dwell for a moment is the transformation in human thought and ideas which resulted from the coming of Christ. Take some early Christian book—for example, the two Epistles to the Corinthians. They were certainly genuine works of S. Paul. They were written about twenty years after the death of Christ. Analyze these books with care. Work out for yourselves the conceptions that they present of the purpose of

human life, their moral teaching, their spiritual attainment, the conception of Christian society already formed. Then compare this picture with anything that pre-Christian times produced. Take the highest conceptions of Jewish or Greek or Roman life—Plato, or a contemporary life like that of Seneca, or Marcus Aurelius who, though he lived later, was never touched by these new ideas. Put together the highest ideal which you can form from the best of the later Jewish writings. Then compare these with this picture of early Christian life, and then notice what a tremendous change of life and thought lies behind the two conceptions.

What power was able to produce this transformation in so short a time? Clearly a new force and new ideas had come into the world. Now if you put in its proper place the conception of Christ and the teaching of Christ contained in the Gospels, you get an adequate and satisfactory cause for this phenomenon. But if you say that the Gospels and the Gospel conception of Christ are the product of the Christian Church and not its cause, you have the beginning of Christianity left, as it were, in the air. You have no adequate cause or reason for its coming into existence. You cannot explain the earliest teaching of the Christian Church unless you have the teaching of Christ behind it.

V

Then, thirdly, let us take the growth of Christianity, the development of Christianity represented in Church history, and the transformation which it has

worked in the world. Supposing that at the time of the Crucifixion you had met an intelligent Roman citizen, and suggested to him that the time would come when the name of the man hanging on the cross would have become more powerful than that of any Roman Emperor, he would have looked at your suggestion as an absurdity. Here we have a small race of people living in an obscure part of the world, a people who were in a particular degree looked upon with contempt by the educated people of their time. Among them there is a little knot of men, men neither of wealth nor position nor education nor any of those things which are looked upon as powerful and important in the world, but who are inspired by a belief in the Jesus who had died on the cross. Gradually, at first, in an almost imperceptible way, in a way which you would hardly have noticed if you had been an intelligent observer of the Empire at the time, that small body expands throughout the whole world, and their religion becomes that of the whole Roman Empire. This it does in spite of the fact that it had to meet with very great opposition, unpopularity, persecution, and suppression in every form. It is untrue, of course, to say that persecution always fails; it often does not fail; but when persecution does fail it is a testimony to the inherent force and power of the religion which is persecuted.

And then you advance further in Christian history, and you find that that religion has an entirely unexpected vitality; it conquers the Roman Empire, but a time comes when that Empire begins to fail from internal weakness, and new races, uncivilized, from the North come one after another,

breaking into the frontiers of civilization and gradually overrunning and destroying it. It might be thought that they would completely annihilate the old civilization, but we find that, as a matter of fact, the Christian religion in contact with them shows a new power of expansion. It sends out its missionaries and, one after another, it converts and wins to itself these nations. It has associated to itself much of the old civilization, and through its power a number of new nations in new parts of the world come into being. Gradually there is created the great structure of the mediæval papacy and empire, and a new and vigorous civilization springs into life.

But a time comes when this civilization itself shows signs of failure. This particular representation of the Christian religion exhibited by mediæval institutions becomes contaminated, and cannot fit itself to new conditions. But again you find new life and vitality. You have all the great movements which are associated with the Reformation and the counter-Reformation, and again, under the influence of the spirit which Christianity has created, you find the nations of modern Europe built up.

VI

Then, fourthly, we come to the actual existing state of things in the world at the present time. And the first point that we notice is that, on one side, there is a Christian civilization—namely, that of Christian nations, or those who have come in contact with it—and outside its limits there is every variety of

different and older civilizations and of nations and tribes which cannot claim to be civilized.

Now we are accustomed to look at that Christian civilization, as we see it exhibited at the present time, with a critical eye. We are conscious of its defects. How often do we read of the failure of Christianity! In a sense, no doubt, such criticism is true; we present Christianity in a most inadequate way. But if you contrast the civilization which has been built up and created by Christianity with the various forms of non-Christian civilization, the contrast becomes very marked. I do not know anything that impressed me more than after travelling for many months in Turkey, to pass from the Turkish Empire to those different countries that have freed themselves from that influence, and have begun to live a Christian life and come within the sphere of Christian civilization. It was quite possible to criticize these Christian countries. They often fail. But in everything that civilization or a higher life means there was no doubt at all of their superiority. We find certain broad ideas which inevitably underlie all Christian civilization which you do not find when you pass beyond the limits. Of course, there is around Christian civilization at the present time a fringe influenced by it, where Christian ideas are working. But whatever defects you have to find in the Christian civilization, there is no doubt at all that, in the ideas it represents and in the life it creates, there is something definitely and decisively higher. I think, too, even at the present time, when there has been a serious breakdown of civilization in more than one direction, the

breakdown is due to a more or less definite repudiation of Christianity, and is to that extent an indirect testimony to the value of the Christian message. That was the case, of course, in the eighteenth century in France, followed by the French Revolution. The eighteenth century prided itself upon being an age of enlightenment. A society was built up which definitely criticized and repudiated not only the presentment of Christianity but the actual Christian tradition, and the result was shown in the break-up of society and in the horrors of the French Revolution. So, in the same way, we cannot shut our eyes to the fact that in many directions in the nineteenth century there has been a more or less complete repudiation of Christian teaching, and that has shown itself both in a development of a militarism which has horrified the world, just because it has definitely repudiated the restraints of Christianity, and then exactly in the same way by the development of a revolutionary tendency which is the determined opponent of Christianity, and is producing great misery in the countries in which it has obtained a footing.

The same lesson may be learnt from eighteenth-century France, which prided itself on enlightenment and then repudiated the Christian presentment of life and denied the validity of the Christian traditions. But the result was apparent in the break-up of society and the lessons of the French Revolution. So, in our own day, we cannot shut our eyes to the fact that a more or less complete repudiation of Christian teaching has first of all led to a militarism which has shocked the world, and

then to revolutions which have reduced to misery those countries where they have occurred.

I think if we look at the world as it is at the present time, the two conclusions we shall come to are—(1) that where Christian principle prevails there is a higher and better civilization; and (2) that one of the great needs of the world at present is greater faithfulness to Christianity. It is not that Christianity in itself has failed, but that Christian nations, by repudiating Christianity, have failed.

Now, I do not wish to speak dogmatically. It is difficult to prove either a sense of purpose in the world or the reality of conceptions of things which transcend experience, but I would put it to you that the experience of the world in these nineteen centuries which have passed since the death of Christ is some evidence that the teaching of Christianity is a real and true interpretation of what the world and human life mean. If a nation is prepared to build itself up on the triple basis of righteousness and brotherhood and sacrifice, we find it able to develop a higher type of civilization than a non-Christian people have ever attained to. And we are convinced that if the Christian ideals could be more truly accepted and carried out, many of the evils from which society is suffering would come to an end.

Such, if I may put it so, is the experience of the world. But there is another experience and that is that of the individual. Those who have been ready and prepared to accept the Christian message have found in it an adequate explanation of their human life and a powerful means for elevating it. The

experience of the world seems to suggest that the Christian teaching is a true interpretation of what the world is. We recognize the limits of the human intelligence; we recognize that man by wisdom has not found out God and cannot find Him out, that neither science nor philosophy is able really to tell us about the true nature of things. Christianity comes and claims to be a revelation. It claims that Jesus Christ, Himself the Son of God, came to reveal to us the true Nature of God and the true destiny of man, and that that is contained in the great principles of righteousness and love and sacrifice To test that claim we appeal to experience, and whether we look at its influence on the conduct of the individual human being or at its corporate influence in the world, we find a body of facts which may, perhaps, be held to provide for us a legitimate justification for accepting this revelation as a true explanation for us of what are the realities of the world.

LECTURE VIII

THE CHRISTIAN CHURCH

THE CHRISTIAN CHURCH

I COME now to the final question that I desire to discuss with you—the origin of the Christian Church. The most fundamental fact that we have to account for in the study of Christianity is the existence of the Christian Church. It is a great religious society extending now throughout the whole world, embracing a large section of the human race, and although divided both in its external life and to a certain extent in its teaching, yet presenting in contrast to the non-Christian world a large amount of agreement both in life and faith.

What is the relation of this society to Jesus Christ, whose name it bears? The question might seem to be an unnecessary one. Jesus we might naturally assume to have been the founder of Christianity and therefore of the Christian Church. That is the traditional view. The foundation of the Christian Church was due to the definite purpose of Jesus Christ. It was the intention with which He worked. It was part of His plan for the salvation of the world. It has even been maintained that many of the regulations which have governed the Church come directly from Him, that the custom and order of the Church as He founded it have been handed down by

tradition, and are therefore essential and necessary parts of Church life. This tradition is embodied in a number of apocryphal documents which purport to give the directions of Jesus to His Apostles on the government and order of the Church. It has been widely held that in the interval between the Resurrection and Ascension instructions on many ecclesiastical matters were given by Jesus to the Apostles, and that these are embodied in such works as *The Testament of Our Lord.* No doubt any sober criticism would point out that these extensions of the belief have no historical foundation and cannot be held, but that would not interfere with the ordinary belief that Jesus Christ founded the Church as part of His plan and purpose.

On the other hand, a good deal of modern criticism does not allow us to make quite such a simple answer. It has been maintained that in no sense did Jesus intend to found a Church: that He was only concerned with the immediate future; that He looked forward to the speedy coming of the Son of man, or to His own coming as the Son of man—for opinion is divided on this point—and to a final end of the present world order, and that therefore such matters as the founding and building up of a Church were entirely alien to His purpose and conception. It has been maintained that the existence and growth of the Church was the result of the failure of the Christian hope of the speedy coming of the Son of man.

The problem, then, before us is really this: Did the Church grow up accidentally after the death of Christ through the converging result of a number of different tendencies, or did He purpose to estab-

lish it? It is really very much the same kind of question as that which was presented to us in relation to the personality of our Lord. On that subject we were confronted with two antagonistic theories. According to the one the traditional conception of our Lord's Person is a syncretistic growth. A number of current conceptions, some Jewish, some Greek, were attached to an historical figure, and out of them the Divine Christ of religion was developed. According to the other the belief in the Divine Christ existed from the beginnings of the Christian Church, but the meaning and implication of the belief were gradually learnt, partly through the influence of Christian experience, partly with the assistance of human thought. According to the former view the belief was false, according to the latter it was true.

The problem is the same as regards the Church. We need have no doubt that various elements in the Christian environment helped in the development of the Christian Church, its worship, its faith, its order, and its life, but the real question is whether this was merely interpretation. Was the Church the result of contemporary religious tendencies, or did it in its origin represent part of the plan and purpose of Jesus?

And as the problem is the same, so the critical difficulty is the same that has confronted us all through these investigations. It is obvious that the proper way to answer the question is to examine carefully the language used by our Lord and consider what it implies; but immediately we are told that if you find anything in the Gospel which

seems to refer to the growth and development of the Christian Church, it is not part of our Lord's words but represents what was read into them at a later date. I have often pointed out to you how unsatisfactory is this method of criticism, for it is devoid of any objective criterion. It shapes its evidence to suit its conclusions. But however unsatisfactory it may be, it represents the position which we have before us and with which we have to deal. I would suggest, then, that the method we should pursue is this. We should put for the present on one side the more explicit teaching in the Gospels which refers or seems to refer to a Christian Church, and should study some of the general characteristics of our Lord's words, and ask whether they are consistent with the belief that He simply looked forward to the coming of the Son of man from heaven and had no intention or thought of building up a Christian Society on earth.

I

Let us examine to begin with some of the ethical and religious teaching of our Lord and see what it implies, and let us take first the question of the Sabbath. There is no point in His action and teaching which would be looked upon so generally as authentic. Now if He were expecting the end of the world to come shortly, would He concern Himself so deeply with such a question as the right method of keeping the Sabbath? But if His aim was religious reform, if He desired like the prophets to build up the life of the people on a religion of the

Spirit and of the heart, then such teaching was entirely natural.

And we can extend this. In the Sermon on the Mount the whole question of the Jewish Law and its incidence is discussed. Quite clearly the purpose of Jesus is to substitute a new ethical system for the old legal system. Would that be an intelligent action in the face of an imminent catastrophe? If He were intending, as many Jews might expect, to found on earth a Kingdom of righteousness; if He were intending to reform the religion of the Jewish people; if He were intending to found a new religious society; in any of these cases this transformation of the conception of Law, this higher ethical conception of life would have a meaning. But if He was simply preparing people for the destruction of the old order of things, for the coming of the Son of man from heaven, and the formation of a heavenly Kingdom, surely all this would have little purpose. The only task He would have would be to summon people to repent and enrol themselves as His followers.

And the Sermon on the Mount is not merely ethical, it contains a long section on worship, on almsgiving, prayer, and fasting. All this teaching is, as we have already seen, harmonious in spirit with all the other teaching of Jesus, and would form admirable directions for a reformed Judaism or for a new religious society, but they are quite meaningless unless He had some such purpose. And the same may be said surely about the teaching concerning riches. It speaks, indeed, about the contrast between the earthly and heavenly life. Clearly

the good things which a man should desire are not the things of this world, but the things of another world. The teaching is other-worldly. But the whole point of the teaching is that it gives directions for a natural human life lived in this world. There is no thought of a heavenly kingdom of a supernatural character set up on earth which is to be a substitute for an ordinary life. The follower of Jesus is contemplated as living in the world, with the opportunity of gathering earthly riches, but exhorted to seek heavenly riches. The directions seem to contemplate the conditions of the Christian life as we have known it since. It is quite true that behind all the teaching there is the conception of a judgment to come, but there is no conception that such a judgment is so near that the earthly life is not a matter of any real concern. That would be the case if the apocalyptic conception were adopted.

In fact, the whole conception of the Christian life as depicted most explicitly in the Sermon on the Mount, but also through the whole of the Gospel teaching, is quite inconsistent with any thought of the speedy end of the world; it is, on the other hand, entirely suited to that conception of world order which Christianity and the Christian Church have produced. Is it, then, unreasonable to think that our Lord's words imply a purpose and intention such as has been fulfilled in Christianity?

Or let us take another subject which I have already discussed—the Kingdom of Heaven. It is explained to us in a series of parables, and there is undoubtedly an apocalyptic side. There has never been any doubt that there is an apocalyptic element

in Christianity. The question is one of right proportion. There is the parable of the tares. That implies an interpretation of the Kingdom which is apocalyptic. It is a parable of judgment, but it does not suggest that that judgment is immediate. Rather it pictures a long process in which the forces of good and evil are working side by side in the world until some remote period called the harvest. "Let them both grow together until the harvest." It is a picture of earthly life lived in expectation of a judgment. But as regards most of the parables it is difficult to see what meaning they can have from the apocalyptic point of view. Take the parable of the Sower. That has always been felt to be an admirable exposition of what we mean by preaching the Gospel and the difficulties to which it is exposed, but it is only on a very forced interpretation that any meaning can be given to it in relation to an immediate revelation of the Son of man. And what of the seed growing secretly, or of the leaven? They are admirable descriptions of any movement of thought in the world. Or of the mustard seed? It has quite a good meaning if it refers to the growth of a society on earth, or to the spread of Judaism, or of a transformed Judaism, or to a kingdom of any sort, but it has no meaning at all from the apocalyptic point of view.

I will not lay so much stress on all those passages which speak of the sufferings in the world of the followers of Jesus. They might, perhaps, be explained by the expectation that prevailed of the "Woes of the Messiah"—a short period of suffering and tribulation before the final revelation of the Son

of man. But as regards these also, the charge to the Apostles represents the teaching of a religious message through the world, and the command "Take up thy cross and follow Me" is a rule of life for those who are to be followers of Jesus in being prepared to face if called on a life of suffering on earth. They have inspired a great army of martyrs and confessors, and may it not be that that represented the thought and purpose with which they were uttered?

I think that if we take the great body of the ethical and religious teaching of the Gospels—just that teaching about the authenticity of which there could be the least doubt—you will see that it is adapted, as I have said, to the growth and extension of a reformed Judaism, or to the establishment of an earthly Kingdom of righteousness, or to something like the Christian Church, but it does not imply the expectation of an immediate coming of a Son of man.

II

And now let me turn to another point—the relation of our Lord's teaching to the Old Testament. The Old Testament represents religion always as associated with a society, originally with a nation. Its expectations are always put in the form of the expectation of a kingdom, although that kingdom has characteristics which separate it from any of the kingdoms of the earth. But gradually the Jewish ideal had been, quite unconsciously, changing. The old idea of the kingdom was gradually making way for the newer idea of the Church. This change had

arisen from several different causes. It had come first through the failure of national aspiration. The last great outbreak of Jewish nationalism had been at the period of the Maccabæan revolt, but after the first enthusiasm had passed away, nationalism had obviously failed—failed not merely in its incapacity to assert itself against the great empires of the time, but failed spiritually. Even at the very beginning the Chasidim, the more pious of the Jews, had been dissatisfied with the military necessities of the Maccabees. There were those who refused to fight on the Sabbath, and preferred to be massacred. But when the High Priest of the Jews consorted with Gentiles, when he gradually learnt more and more the ways of the Gentiles, the breach between Jewish nationalism and Jewish piety became intensified, until, in the time of Alexander Jannæus, we have the gross exhibition of Gentile immorality and the bitter persecution of the Pharisees; so that while any intelligent person would know, after the capture of Jerusalem by Pompey, that there was no hope in the future of any real independence, the more religious portion of the nation had already begun to have different aspirations. And those aspirations gradually led to the organization of the Jewish people as a Church rather than a nation, and that ideal was carried out more definitely after the destruction of Jerusalem.

Then, secondly, the old idea that the Jewish religion must be confined to those who were true sons of Abraham gradually broke down. It had never been strictly held, and there was a constant tendency whenever it was possible to extend the

domain of Judaism by proselytism, a proselytism which was sometimes carried on by force, and sometimes by religious propaganda. The inhabitants of Galilee were converted by compulsion to Judaism during the period of nationalist success, and wherever the Jews settled in foreign lands there was a tendency for religious propaganda to grow up. It was carried on with great literary activity in Alexandria, and we find traces of it in many other parts of the world.

Then, thirdly, the growth of the dispersion obviously led to the breakdown of nationalism. The Jew in foreign lands demanded freedom to practise his religion. He became less and less concerned with the national aspirations of his fellow-countrymen. He found himself living under foreign rule, surrounded by people with foreign customs, and yet able with certain modifications to obey the law and to keep his faith. Naturally he became less and less interested in the desire for creating a national monarchy in Jerusalem. It was the Temple, the Temple services, and central rites of his faith that interested him. So gradually there had grown up a transformed idea of the Jewish society, and all the characteristics of a Church were being exhibited—that is to say, the organization of religion independently of the State.

The important point for our purpose is to notice that religion at that time and for the Jew was definitely associated with the idea of a society, whether the old idea of a religious state or the newer idea of the Church, and it was in such an environment that Christianity spread and in such an environment that

our Lord taught. Now it is quite possible to suggest that it was the unconscious influence of this environment which may have caused the building up of the Christian Church, and undoubtedly it would contribute to it; but I have pointed out throughout these lectures that our Lord always taught and thought according to the ideas of His time, that all His religious teaching grew directly out of the conditions of His day, that there were no anachronisms in it. It would, therefore, be probable that, although He adhered to the traditions of prophetic teaching which emphasized individualism in religion, He would also adhere to the traditions of His people, which looked upon religion as something corporate and social. That is what we should expect, but whether that was the case or not we must now determine by a study of His action.

III

The Christian Church is built on four great principles — brotherhood, discipleship, ministry, and sacraments. If we take our Gospels as we have them, all these principles owe their origin directly to the action of Jesus. Is it possible to believe that that action was accidental and purposeless?

Christianity is based upon the idea of brotherhood. Its fundamental ethical principle is to substitute relations between man and man based on love for those based on hatred, and in harmony with that idea those who have become followers of Christ are described in relation to one another as brothers.

Was there any particular point in creating a great Christian brotherhood if our Lord's teaching merely looked forward to a speedy coming of the Son of man? And in His instructions to His followers He gives them regulations for their relations to their brethren.

He collected together a body of disciples. They were followers of Him. They were attached to His person. "Come, follow me." "Come unto me all ye that are weary and are heavy laden." These became the nucleus of the Christian Church that grew up afterwards. In relation to Himself they are called "disciples," in relation to one another they are called "brethren." Such action, if we found it in any teacher of religion, we would assume meant that in some form or other He intended them to be a society who would live according to His principles and give permanence and continuity to His teaching. Is there any reason why we should come to any different conclusion about the action of our Lord?

And then He selected twelve Apostles. What was the meaning or purpose with which He did this? He sent them forth as labourers in His vineyard; He bid them summon people to His Kingdom. When He summoned the first whom He called, Peter and James and John, He described them as fishers of men, quite a natural description if the work for which they were appointed was to collect men into His Kingdom, or His Church, or any other society, but what meaning would the expression have in the face of an immediate coming of the Son of man? He promised them a life of

persecution and suffering. That, again, was quite natural if they were to be the missionaries of an unpopular religion. Surely the whole of the work of Jesus in the summoning and sending forth and instructing the twelve is entirely in harmony with the events which afterwards happened, but was hardly an intelligent policy if our Lord had no intention of founding a society.

And the same is true of the Last Supper. According to the accounts which we have, Jesus celebrated the Last Supper with His disciples. He clearly connected His action with His death. He clearly implied that He was inaugurating a new covenant. He bid them do this in remembrance of Him. From the very beginnings of the Christian Church we find them fulfilling His command. The perverted form of criticism which suggests that the story of what Jesus did was invented to account for the custom of the Church has this disadvantage, that it does not explain how the custom of the Church arose. As we have the narrative, the whole sequence of events is natural. All the implications of the Last Supper have been felt to harmonize with the Christian conceptions, and a rite such as this implies the continuance of a society to celebrate it. The action of Jesus harmonizes with the result that followed, and seems to imply a purpose and intention.

And then, of course, there are specific statements of a society called the Church. Our Lord is represented as saying quite clearly and definitely, "I will build my Church." Of course, we are told that this, like the promise to Peter, was brought in from the

times of the Christian Church. But are there any arguments which would really justify us in saying that? Let us take the word Church—*Ecclesia*. It was not a new invention. Whether in Hebrew, Aramaic, or Greek form it comes from the Old Testament. It was a word used of the assembly of Israel in an ideal aspect. Even in the Old Testament it was almost if not actually a synonym for Israel. It can quite well become that. There is no reason why Jesus should not have used the expression, and we are quite definitely told that He did. Moreover, if He used it and used it in this significant way, it would help to explain how it gradually became a recognized word of the early Christian community. If you will go into all the different expressions used in the famous passage addressed to S. Peter, "The gates of hell," "binding and loosing," the very name "Simon Bar-Jonah"—they are all Jewish Aramaic expressions clearly belonging to a period before any Greek influence had come in. And the promise to Peter which makes him what he is, described early in the New Testament as "the first," harmonizes exactly with the actual facts. Peter was the leader of the Apostles in our Lord's lifetime and was the leader of the primitive Christian community. Is it not natural that he should owe this position to the appointment of his Master? Because this passage has had read into it things which are not contained in it, and has been used to support a form of Christian teaching which many of us do not believe, that is no reason why we should suggest that it is not genuine.

The actions of our Lord as narrated in the Gospels

are those of one who would found a society such as the Christian Church, and He is represented as stating His intention of doing so. And the Church was founded and created. Do not all these actions harmonize, and is it not rational to think that it was His intention and plan?

IV

I should like now to try to picture for ourselves what we might consider to be our Lord's purpose. He was primarily a teacher of a more spiritual religion and a more spiritual morality than people had yet conceived or realized. In the place of a legal system of morality He substituted a rule of righteousness and love and sacrifice. In the place of a religion which had become largely a religion of externals, He taught a religion of the spirit. But He did this within the limits of the Jewish community, and we should naturally expect that that Jewish community would be looked upon as the one from which His teaching was to be given. He gave this teaching as the Messiah whom the Jews expected, and if you read the Old Testament, and especially the prophets of the Old Testament, from this standpoint, you find a representation of a new Kingdom, a revivified, reformed Kingdom of an ideal David in which those principles of righteousness and love might prevail which had been depicted by the prophets in some passages of great poetic beauty. This new Kingdom was to be accompanied by a new covenant, a new principle, a new law. But none of this teaching or this expectation was

apart from or separate from the old Israel. Moreover, prophets had often spoken of a Kingdom which should extend beyond the limits of Israel, to which the Gentiles should come, which should unite the nations of the earth in a bond of peace. It would, then, be primarily through the religious society of Israel that Jesus would teach. But the religious society of Israel indignantly repudiated Him. People might listen to Him, but the authorities sought to kill Him. They sought to kill Him in Galilee; they sought to kill Him later in Jerusalem. Then they succeeded.

The new society, in consequence, could not be simply the old transformed, and so He begins to lay the preparation for it by selecting His Apostles, by giving them His instructions as to their actions, and by preparing to go up to Jerusalem to found this Kingdom. That, then, was His purpose. But there was always the expectation also of His death. He goes up to Jerusalem with His disciples. He makes it clear that He goes as the Messiah, but not as the Messiah that people expected. The entry into Jerusalem, the cleansing of the Temple, could have no other meaning. The entry into Jerusalem showed that He was a Messiah very different from what people expected. The cleansing of the Temple was the preparation for the more spiritual worship. He goes on teaching. He makes the final preparation for it in the Last Supper and in His death. And then everything happens as He willed. The Christian society does fulfil all the expectations we may learn from the Gospels.

Now I would like you to think how we should interpret this. Of course, we can say that it was an accidental growth, but I do not think that things happen accidentally in the world like that. The other interpretation we could give is that the foundation and building of the Christian Church was the purpose of Jesus, a purpose for which He prepared by laying the foundations in the right way. He might, of course, have definitely stated that He was founding such a society. He might have laid down its constitution, given it its rules, formulated its teaching; He might have done everything in fact which He did not do. Had He done this it would have pleased all those persons who are so anxious to be able to define the content and rules of the Christian Church, but quite clearly it would have been a temporary affair. Had it been organized by Him in a way which would have fitted itself to the particular circumstances when He lived, it would very quickly have been found to be an anachronism out of date; the world having changed, the Church would have been bound by the rules of its Master. He did none of these things. He simply taught in accordance with great principles and acted in accordance with His future aim, and so the Church has no burden behind it, which can ever prevent it from adapting itself to newer circumstances. From time to time in the Christian Church, and to a certain extent at the present time and among certain religious bodies, the principles, the rules, the ordinances which prevailed in the Church begin to have ascribed to them an unchanging character. As soon as ever that is done we find a gulf be-

ginning to grow up between those who look forward and those who look back. The method of Jesus prevents anything of that sort. The Christian Church still has its great principles on which it is built up, but there is never anything coming from its Master which will hamper its free, spontaneous development.

V

In conclusion I would ask you to think over what is implied in the exposition that I have attempted to put before you of the Life and Personality of Jesus. If we take simply His Personality as it is depicted to us in the Gospels, we feel that it is something which transcends our ordinary human experience. Generation after generation of Christians have turned to the Gospels and have felt in Jesus something which does not correspond to ordinary human life. We turn to His teaching and we find that He has substituted for all the intricate teaching of the Jewish Law and for the very imperfect codes of morality of the Gentiles certain great and fundamental principles which I have summed up in the words righteousness and love and sacrifice, and that the Christian society since His time has lived on the practice of these principles. Because it has practised them it has been able to survive, in so far as it has held to them it has been successful, whenever it has been untrue to them a period of failure has begun.

We turn to His own purpose and intention, whether in life or after, and we find in all that

happened the traces of a policy, if you like to call it so, which far transcended ordinary political foresight. Exactly the way in which Jesus acted in relation to the building of the Church was the way in which the growth of that Church might be made successful. And then of Himself. He spoke of Himself in a particular and close relation to God. He had spiritual power, so we are told, such as others have not had. His disciples were convinced that He had risen from the dead. Now, does not all this combine together to suggest to us that we cannot interpret the life of Jesus as the life of an ordinary man? Quite clearly He was a man, living as a man, who had all the characteristics of human life, but quite clearly He was something more. And I would suggest to you that the more we ponder over these things the more we shall be convinced of the truth of the belief of the Christian Church.

I have not attempted to do what people have sometimes aimed at, to distinguish the Divine and the human elements in Christ's life. I have not attempted to say what were the limits of His earthly knowledge. I do not believe that in His earthly manifestation His knowledge was more than might be that of a man inspired by the Spirit of God. His earthly teaching, His earthly life, His earthly Personality were entirely real, but I believe the true interpretation of all that experience and of the experience of mankind since may be best studied and summed up in the words of the Christian Creed.

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